

The Arkham Sampler

SUMMER, 1949

THE ONE WHO WAITS

by RAY BRADBURY

IN THE YEAR 2889

by JULES VERNE

THE DOOR

by DAVID H. KELLER

ARKHAM HOUSE + PUBLISHERS
SAUK CITY + WISCONSIN

One Dollar

The Arkham Sampler

Summer 1949

Contents

THE ONE WHO WAITS, a story by Ray Bradbury ---	3
IN THE YEAR 2889, a fiction by Jules Verne -----	9
HIEROGLYPHICS, a poem by Vincent Starrett -----	24
JOURNEY TO THE WORLD UNDERGROUND, a novel by Lewis Holberg -----	25
OBLIVION, a poem by Jose-Maria de Heredia -----	73
THE DOOR, a story by David H. Keller -----	74
TWO HORSEMEN, a poem by Vincent Starrett -----	81
TWO POEMS AFTER BAUDELAIRE, by Clark Ashton Smith -----	82
BOOKS OF THE QUARTER	
The Derleth Science-Fiction Collections, by Everett	
F. Bleiler -----	84
Ode to a Skylark, by Robert Bloch -----	86
More Caldecott, by Edward Wagenknecht -----	88
Poetry of Immortality, by John Haley -----	89
"American Dreams" and Utopias, by Everett F. Bleiler	90
Salem Again, by Robert Bloch -----	93
A Mixed Bag, by August Derleth -----	94

Copyright 1949, by August Derleth

EDITORIAL COMMENTARY

Coming Events -----	98
Our Science-Fiction Anthologies -----	99
Our Contributors -----	100
Rheinhart Kleiner (1893-1949) -----	100

* * * * *

Published quarterly by Arkham House: Publishers, Sauk City, Wisconsin. Single copies, \$1.00. Subscription rates: One year in the United States and possessions: \$4.00. Foreign and Canadian postage extra. The publishers are not responsible for the loss of unsolicited manuscripts, but every care will be taken of any submitted material while it is in their possession.

Published in the United States of America

Volume 2, Number 3
(Whole Number 7)

THE ONE WHO WAITS

by RAY BRADBURY

I live in a well. I live like smoke in the well. Like vapor in a stone throat. I don't move. I don't do anything but wait. Overhead, I see the cold stars of night and morning, and I see the sun. And sometimes I sing old songs of this world when it was young. How can I tell you what I am when I don't know? I cannot. I am simply waiting. I am mist and moonlight and memory. I am sad and I am old. Sometimes I fall like rain into the well. Spider webs are startled into forming where my rain falls fast, on the water surface. I wait in cool silence and there will be a day when I no longer wait.

Now it is morning. I hear a great thunder. I smell red fire from a distance. I hear a metal crashing. I wait. I listen.

Voices. Far away.

"All right!"

One voice. An alien voice. An alien tongue I cannot know. No word is familiar. I listen.

"Send the men out!"

A crunching in crystal sands.

"So this is Mars!"

"Where's the flag?"

"Here you are, sir."

"Good, good."

The sun is high in the blue sky and its golden rays fill the well and I hang like a flower pollen, invisible and misting in the warm light.

Voices.

"In the name of the Government of Earth, I proclaim this to be the Martian Territory, to be equally divided between the member nations."

"Amen."

What are they saying? I turn in the sun, like a wheel, invisible and lazy, golden and tireless.

"What's over here?"

"A well!"

"No?"

"Come on and see."

The approach of warmth. Three objects bend over the well mouth and my coolness rises to the objects.

"Good!"

"Think it's good water?"

"We'll see."

"Someone get a bucket."

"I will!"

A sound of running. The return.

"Here we are."

I wait.

"Let it down on the rope. Easy."

The water ripples softly as the bucket touches and fills. I rise in the warm air toward the well-mouth.

"Here we are. You want to test this water, Regent?"

"Let's have it."

"What a beautiful well. Look at that construction. How old you think it is?"

"God knows. When we landed in that other town yesterday Smith said there hasn't been life on Mars in ten thousand years."

"Imagine."

"How is it, Regent? The water."

"Pure as silver. Have a glass."

The sound of water in the hot sunlight. Now I hover like a dust, a cinnamon, upon the soft wind.

"What's the matter, Jones?"

"I don't know. Got a terrific headache. All of a sudden."

"Did you drink the water yet?"

"No, I haven't. It's not that. I was just bending over the well and all of a sudden, my head split. I feel better now."

Now I know who I am.

My name is Stephen Leonard Jones and I am 23 years old and I have just come in a rocket from a planet called Earth and I am standing with my good friends Regent and Shaw by an old well on the planet Mars.

I look down at my golden fingers, tan and strong. I look at my long legs and at my silver uniform and at my friends.

"What's wrong, Jones?" they say.

"Nothing," I say, looking at them. "Nothing at all."

The food is good. It has been ten thousand years since food. It touches the tongue in a fine way and the wine with the food is warming. I listen to the sound of voices. I make words that I do not understand but somehow understand. I test the air.

"What's the matter, Jones?"

I tilt this head of mine and rest my hands holding the silver utensils of eating. I feel everything.

"What do you mean?" this voice, this new thing of mine, says.

"You keep breathing funny. Coughing," says the other one.

I pronounce exactly. "Maybe a little cold coming on."

"Check with the doc later."

I nod my head and it is good to nod. It is good to do several things after ten thousand years. It is good to breathe the air and it is good to feel the sun in the flesh deep and going deeper and it is good to feel the structure of ivory, the fine skeleton hidden in the warming flesh, and it is good to hear sounds much clearer and more immediate than they were in the stone deepness of a well. I sit enchanted.

"Come out of it, Jones. Snap it. We got to move!"

"Yes," I say, hypnotized with the way the word forms like water on the tongue and falls with slow beauty out into the air.

I walk and it is good walking. I stand high and it is a long way to the ground when I look down from my eyes and my head. It is like living on a fine cliff and being happy there.

Regent stands by the stone wall, looking down. The others have gone murmuring to the silver ship from which they came.

I feel the fingers of my hand and the smile of my mouth.

"It is deep," I say.

"Yes."

"It is called a Soul Well."

Regent raises his head and looks at me. "How do you know that?"

"Doesn't it look like one?"

"I never heard of a Soul Well."

"A place where waiting things, things that once had flesh, wait and wait," I say, touching his arm.

The sand is fire and the ship is silver fire in the hotness of the day and the heat is good to feel. The sound of my feet in the hard sand. I listen. The sound of the wind and the sun burning the valleys. I smell the smell of the rocket boiling in the noon. I stand below the port.

"Where's Regent?" someone says.

"I saw him by the well," I reply.

One of them runs toward the well. I am beginning to tremble. A fine shivering tremble, hidden deep, but becoming very strong. And for the first time I hear it, as if it, too, were hidden in a well. A voice calling deep within me, tiny and afraid. And the voice cries, Let me go, let me go, and there is a feeling as if something was trying to get free, a pounding of labyrinthine doors, a rushing down dark corridors and up passages, echoing and screaming.

"Regent's in the well!"

The men are running, all five of them. I run with them but now I am sick and the trembling is violent.

"He must have fallen. Jones, you were here with him. Did you see? Jones? Well, speak up, man."

"What's wrong, Jones?"

I fall to my knees, the trembling is so bad.

"He's sick. Here, help me with him."

"The sun."

"No, not the sun," I murmur.

They stretch me out and the seizures come and go like earthquakes and the deep hidden voice in me cries This is Jones, this is *me*, that's not him, that's not him, don't believe him, let me out, let me out! And I look up at the bent figures and my eyelids flicker. They touch my wrists.

"His heart is acting up."

I close my eyes. The screaming stops. The shivering ceases. I rise, as in a cool well, released.

"He's dead," says someone.

"Jones is dead."

"From what?"

"Shock, it looks like."

"What kind of shock?" I say, and my name is Sessions and my lips move crisply, and I am the captain of these men. I stand among them and I am looking down at a body which lies cooling on the sands. I clap both hands to my head.

"Captain!"

"It's nothing," I say, crying out. "Just a headache. I'll be all right. There. There," I whisper. "It's all right now."

"We'd better get out of the sun, sir."

"Yes," I say, looking down at Jones. "We should never have come. Mars doesn't want us."

We carry the body back to the rocket with us, and a new voice is calling deep in me to be let out.

"Help, help." Far down in the moist earthenworks of the body. "Help, help!" in red fathoms, echoing and pleading.

The trembling starts much sooner this time. The control is less steady.

"Captain, you'd better get in out of the sun, you don't look too well, sir."

"Yes," I say. "Help," I say.

"What, sir?"

"I didn't say anything."

"You said 'Help', sir."

"Did I, Mathews, did I?"

The body is laid out in the shadow of the rocket and the voice screams in the deep underwater catacombs of bone and crimson tide. My hands jerk. My mouth splits and is parched. My nostrils fasten wide. My eyes roll. Help, help, oh help, don't don't, let me out, don't, don't.

"Don't," I say.

"What, sir?"

"Never mind," I say. "I've got to get free," I say. I clap my hand to my mouth.

"How's that, sir?" cries Mathews.

"Get inside, all of you, go back to Earth!" I shout.

A gun is in my hand. I lift it.

"Don't, sir!"

An explosion. Shadows run. The screaming is cut off. There is a whistling sound of falling through space.

After ten thousand years, how good to die. How good to feel the sudden coolness, the relaxation. How good to be like a hand within a glove that stretches out and grows wonderfully cold in the hot sand. Oh, the quiet and the loveliness of gathering, darkening death. But one cannot linger on.

A crack, a snap.

"Good God, he's killed himself!" I cry, and open my eyes and there is the captain lying against the rocket, his skull split by a bullet, his eyes wide, his tongue protruding between his white teeth. Blood runs from his head. I bend to him and touch him. "The fool," I say. "Why did he do that?"

The men are horrified. They stand over the two dead men and turn their heads to see the Martian sands and the distant

well where Regent lies lolling in deep waters. A croaking comes out their dry lips, a whimpering, a childish protest against this awful dream.

The men turn to me.

After a long while, one of them says, "That makes you captain, Mathews."

"I know," I say, slowly.

"Only six of us left."

"Good God, it happened so quick!"

"I don't want to stay here, let's get out!"

The men clamor. I go to them and touch them now, with a confidence which almost sings in me. "Listen," I say, and touch their elbows or their arms or their hands.

We all fall silent.

We are one.

No, no, no, no, no! Inner voices crying, deep down and gone into prisons beneath exteriors.

We are looking at each other. We are Samuel Mathews and Raymond Moses and William Spaulding and Charles Evans and Forrest Cole and John Summers, and we say nothing but look upon each other and our white faces and shaking hands.

We turn, as one, and look at the well.

"Now," we say.

No, no, six voices scream, hidden and layered down and stored forever.

Our feet walk in the sand and it is as if a great hand with twelve fingers was moving across the hot sea bottom.

We bend to the well, looking down. From the cool depths six faces peer back up at us.

One by one we bend until our balances are gone, and one by one drop into the mouth and down through cool darkness into the cold waters.

The sun sets. The stars wheel upon the night sky. Far out, there is a wink of light. Another rocket coming, leaving red marks on space.

I live in a well. I live like smoke in a well. Like vapor in a stone throat. Overhead, I see the cold stars of night and morning, and I see the sun. And sometimes I sing old songs of this world when it was young. How can I tell you what I am when even I don't know. I cannot.

I am simply waiting.

IN THE YEAR 2889

by JULES VERNE

Little though they seem to think of it, the people of this twenty-ninth century live continually in fairyland. Surfeited as they are with marvels, they are indifferent in presence of each new marvel. To them all seems natural. Could they but duly appreciate the refinements of civilization in our day; could they but compare the present with the past, and so better comprehend the advance we have made! How much fairer they would find our modern towns, with populations amounting sometimes to 10,000,000 souls; their streets 300 feet wide, their houses 1000 feet in height; with a temperature the same in all seasons; with their lines of aerial locomotion crossing the sky in every direction! If they would but picture to themselves the state of things that once existed, when through muddy streets rumbling boxes on wheels, drawn by horses—yes, by horses!—were the only means of conveyance. Think of the railroads of the olden time, and you will be able to appreciate the pneumatic tubes through which today one travels at the rate of 1000 miles an hour. Would not our contemporaries prize the telephone and the telephote more highly if they had not forgotten the telegraph?

Singularly enough, all these transformations rest upon principles which were perfectly familiar to our remote ancestors, but which they disregarded. Heat, for instance, is as ancient as man himself; electricity was known 3000 years ago, and steam 1100 years ago. Nay, so early as ten centuries ago it was known that the differences between the several chemical and physical forces depend on the mode of vibration of the etheric particles, which is for each specifically different. When at last the kinship of all these forces was discovered, it is simply astounding that 500 years should still have to elapse before men could analyze and describe the several modes of vibration that constitute these differences. Above all, it is singular that the mode of reproducing these forces directly from one another, and of reproducing one without the others, should have remained undiscovered till less than a hundred years ago. Nevertheless, such was the course of events, for it was not till the year 2792 that the famous Oswald Nier made this great discovery.

Truly was he a great benefactor to the human race. His admirable discovery led to many another. Hence is sprung a pleiad of inventors, its brightest star being our great Joseph Jackson. To Jackson we are indebted for those wonderful instruments the new accumulators. Some of these absorb and condense the living force contained in the sun's rays; others, the electricity stored in our globe; others again, the energy coming from whatever source, as a waterfall, a stream, the winds, etc. He, too, it was that invented the transformer, a more wonderful contrivance still, which takes the living force from the accumulator, and, on the simple pressure of a button, gives it back to space in whatever form may be desired, whether as heat, light, electricity, or mechanical force, after having first obtained from it the work required. From the day these two instruments were contrived is to be dated the era of true progress. They have put into the hands of man a power that is almost infinite. As for their applications, they are numberless. Mitigating the rigors of winter, by giving back to the atmosphere the surplus heat stored up during the summer, they have revolutionized agriculture. By supplying motive power for aerial navigation, they have given to commerce a mighty impetus. To them we are indebted for the continuous production of electricity without batteries or dynamos, of light without combustion or incandescence, and for an unfailing supply of mechanical energy for all the needs of industry.

Yes, all these wonders have been wrought by the accumulator and the transformer. And can we not to them also trace, indirectly, this latest wonder of all, the great "Earth Chronicle" building in 253d Avenue, which was dedicated the other day? If George Washington Smith, the founder of the Manhattan "Chronicle," should come back to life to-day, what would he think were he to be told that this palace of marble and gold belongs to his remote descendant, Fritz Napoleon Smith, who, after thirty generations have come and gone, is owner of the same newspaper which his ancestor established!

For George Washington Smith's newspaper has lived generation after generation, now passing out of the family, anon coming back to it. When, 200 years ago, the political center of the United States was transferred from Washington to Centropolis, the newspaper followed the government and assumed the name of Earth Chronicle. Unfortunately, it was unable to maintain itself at the high level of its name. Pressed on all sides by rival

journals of a more modern type, it was continually in danger of collapse. Twenty years ago its subscription list contained but a few hundred thousand names, and then Mr. Fritz Napoleon Smith bought it for a mere trifle, and originated telephonic journalism.

Every one is familiar with Fritz Napoleon Smith's system—a system made possible by the enormous development of telephony during the last hundred years. Instead of being printed, the Earth Chronicle is every morning spoken to subscribers, who, in interesting conversations with reporters, statesmen, and scientists, learn the news of the day. Furthermore, each subscriber owns a phonograph, and to this instrument he leaves the task of gathering the news whenever he happens not to be in a mood to listen directly himself. As for purchasers of single copies, they can at a very trifling cost learn all that is in the paper of the day at any of the innumerable phonographs set up nearly everywhere.

Fritz Napoleon Smith's innovation galvanized the old newspaper. In the course of a few years the number of subscribers grew to be 85,000,000, and Smith's wealth went on growing, till now it reaches the almost unimaginable figure of \$10,000,000,000. This lucky hit has enabled him to erect his new building, a vast edifice with four *facades*, each 3,250 feet in length, over which proudly floats the hundred-starred flag of the Union. Thanks to the same lucky hit, he is to-day king of newspaperdom; indeed, he would be king of all the Americans, too, if Americans could ever accept a king. You do not believe it? Well, then, look at the plenipotentiaries of all nations and our own ministers themselves crowding about his door, entreating his counsels, begging for his approbation, imploring the aid of his all-powerful organ. Reckon up the number of scientists and artists that he supports, of inventors that he has under his pay.

Yes, a king is he. And in truth his is a royalty full of burdens. His labors are incessant, and there is no doubt at all that in earlier times any man would have succumbed under the overpowering stress of the toil which Mr. Smith has to perform. Very fortunate for him, thanks to the progress of hygiene, which abating all the old sources of unhealthfulness, has lifted the mean of human life from 37 up to 52 years, men have stronger constitutions now than heretofore. The discovery of nutritive air is still in the future, but in the meantime men to-day consume food that is compounded and prepared according to scientific

principles, and they breathe an atmosphere freed from the micro-organisms that formerly used to swarm in it; hence they live longer than their forefathers and know nothing of the innumerable diseases of olden times.

Nevertheless, and notwithstanding these considerations, Fritz Napoleon Smith's mode of life may well astonish one. His iron constitution is taxed to the utmost by the heavy strain that is put upon it. Vain the attempt to estimate the amount of labor he undergoes; an example alone can give an idea of it. Let us then go about with him for one day as he attends to his multifarious concerns. What day? That matters little; it is the same every day. Let us then take at random September 25th of this present year 2889.

This morning Mr. Fritz Napoleon Smith awoke in very bad humor. His wife having left for France eight days ago, he was feeling disconsolate. Incredible though it seems, in all the ten years since their marriage, this is the first time that Mrs. Edith Smith, the professional beauty, has been so long absent from home; two or three days usually suffice for her frequent trips to Europe. The first thing that Mr. Smith does is to connect his phonotelephone, the wires of which communicate with his Paris mansion. The telephone! Here is another of the great triumphs of science in our time. The transmission of speech is an old story; the transmission of images by means of sensitive mirrors connected by wires is a thing but of yesterday. A valuable invention indeed, and Mr. Smith this morning was not niggard of blessings for the inventor, when by its aid he was able distinctly to see his wife notwithstanding the distance that separated him from her. Mrs. Smith, weary after the ball or the visit to the theater the preceding night, is still abed, though it is near noon tide at Paris. She is asleep, her head sunk in the lace-covered pillows. What? she stirs? Her lips move. She is dreaming perhaps? Yes, dreaming. She is talking, pronouncing a name—his name—Fritz! The delightful vision gave a happier turn to Mr. Smith's thoughts. And now, at the call of imperative duty, light-hearted he springs from his bed and enters his mechanical dresser.

Two minutes later the machine deposited him all dressed at the threshold of his office. The round of journalistic work was now begun. First he enters the hall of the novel-writers, a vast apartment crowned with an enormous transparent cupola. In one corner is a telephone, through which a hundred Earth Chron-

icle *litterateurs* in turn recount to the public in daily installments a hundred novels. Addressing one of these authors who was waiting his turn, "Capital! Capital! my dear fellow," said he, your last story. The scene where the village maid discusses interesting philosophical problems with her lover shows your very acute power of observation. Never have the ways of country folk been better portrayed. Keep on, my dear Archibald, keep on! Since yesterday, thanks to you, there is a gain of 5000 subscribers."

"Mr. John Last," he began again, turning to a new arrival, "I am not so well pleased with your work. Your story is not a picture of life; it lacks the elements of truth. And why? Simply because you run straight on to the end; because you do not analyze. Your heroes do this thing or that from this or that motive, which you assign without ever a thought of dissecting their mental and moral natures. Our feelings, you must remember, are far more complex than all that. In real life every act is the resultant of a hundred thoughts that come and go, and these you must study, each by itself, if you would create a living character. 'But,' you will say, 'in order to note these fleeting thoughts one must know them, must be able to follow them in their capricious meanderings.' Why, any child can do that, as you know. You have simply to make use of hypnotism, electrical or human, which gives one a two-fold being, setting free the witness-personality so that it may see, understand, and remember the reasons which determine the personality that acts. Just study yourself as you live from day to day, my dear Last. Imitate your associate whom I was complimenting a moment ago. Let yourself be hypnotized. What's that? You have tried it already? Not sufficiently, then, not sufficiently!"

Mr. Smith continues his round and enters the reporters' hall. Here 1500 reporters, in their respective places, facing an equal number of telephones, are communicating to the subscribers the news of the world as gathered during the night. The organization of this matchless service has often been described. Besides his telephone, each reporter, as the reader is aware, has in front of him a set of commutators, which enable him to communicate with any desired telephotic line. Thus the subscribers not only hear the news but see the occurrences. When an incident is described that is already past, photographs of its main features are transmitted with the narrative. And there is no confusion

withal. The reporters' items, just like the different stories and all the other component parts of the journal, are classified automatically according to an ingenious system, and reach to hearer in due succession. Furthermore, the hearers are free to listen only to what specially concerns them. They may at pleasure give attention to one editor and refuse it to another.

Mr. Smith next addresses one of the ten reporters in the astronomical department—a department still in the embryonic stage, but which will yet play an important part in journalism.

"Well, Cash, what's the news?"

"We have phototelegrams from Mercury, Venus, and Mars."

"Are those from Mars of any interest?"

"Yes, indeed. There is a revolution in the Central Empire."

"And what of Jupiter?" asked Mr. Smith.

"Nothing as yet. We cannot quite understand their signals. Perhaps ours do not reach them."

"That's bad," exclaimed Mr. Smith, as he hurried away, not in the best of humor, toward the hall of the scientific editors.

With their heads bent down over their electric computors, thirty scientific men were absorbed in transcendental calculations. The coming of Mr. Smith was like the falling of a bomb among them.

"Well, gentlemen, what is this I hear? No answer from Jupiter? Is it always to be thus? Come, Cooley, you have been at work now twenty years on this problem, and yet—"

"True enough," replied the man addressed. "Our science of optics is still very defective, and though our mile-and-three-quarter telescopes—"

"Listen to that, Peer," broke in Mr. Smith, turning to a second scientist. "Optical science defective! Optical science is your specialty. But," he continued, again addressing William Cooley, "failing with Jupiter, are we getting any results from the moon?"

"The case is no better there."

"This time you do not lay the blame on the science of optics. The moon is immeasurably less distant than Mars, yet with Mars our communication is fully established. I presume you will not say that you lack telescopes?"

"Telescopes? O no, the trouble here is about—inhabitants!"

"That's it," added Peer.

"So, then, the moon is positively uninhabited?" asked Mr. Smith.

"At least," answered Cooley, "on the face which she presents to us. As for the opposite side, who knows?"

"Ah, the opposite side! You think, then," remarked Mr. Smith musingly, "that if one could but—"

"Could what?"

"Why, turn the moon about-face."

"Ah, there's something in that," cried the two men at once. And indeed, so confident was their air, they seemed to have no doubt as to the possibility of success in such an undertaking.

"Meanwhile," asked Mr. Smith, after a moment's silence, "have you no news of interest to-day?"

"Indeed we have," answered Cooley. "The elements of Olympus are definitely settled. That great planet gravitates beyond Neptune at the mean distance of 11,400,799,642 miles from the sun, and to traverse its vast orbit takes 1311 years, 294 days, 12 hours, 43 minutes, 9 seconds."

"Why didn't you tell me that sooner?" cried Mr. Smith. "Now inform the reporters of this straightway. You know how eager is the curiosity of the public with regard to these astronomical questions. That news must go into to-day's issue."

Then, the two men bowing to him, Mr. Smith passed into the next hall, an enormous gallery upward of 3200 feet in length, devoted to atmospheric advertising. Every one has noticed those enormous advertisements reflected from the clouds, so large that they may be seen by the population of whole cities or even of entire countries. This, too, is one of Mr. Fritz Napoleon Smith's ideas, and in the Earth Chronicle building a thousand projectors are constantly engaged in displaying upon the clouds these mammoth advertisements.

When Mr. Smith to-day entered the sky-advertising department, he found the operators sitting with folded arms at their motionless projectors, and inquired as to the cause of their inaction. In response, the man addressed simply pointed to the sky, which was of a pure blue. "Yes," muttered Mr. Smith, "a cloudless sky! That's too bad, but what's to be done? Shall we produce rain? That we might do, but is it of any use? What we need is clouds, not rain. Go," said he addressing the head engineer, "go see Mr. Samuel Mark, of the meteorological division of the scientific department, and tell him for me to go

to work in earnest on the question of artificial clouds. It will never do for us to be always thus at the mercy of cloudless skies."

Mr. Smith's daily tour through the several departments of his newspaper is now finished. Next, from the advertisement hall he passes to the reception chamber, where the ambassadors accredited to the American government are awaiting him, desirous of having a word of counsel or advice from the all-powerful editor. A discussion was going on when he entered. "Your Excellency will pardon me," the French Ambassador was saying to the Russian, "but I see nothing in the map of Europe that requires change. 'The North for the Slavs?' Why, yes, of course; but the South for the Latins. Our common frontier, the Rhine, it seems to me, serves very well. Besides, my government, as you must know, will firmly oppose every movement, not only against Paris, our capital, or our two great prefectures, Rome and Madrid, but also against the kingdom of Jerusalem, the dominion of Saint Peter, of which France means to be the trusty defender."

"Well said!" exclaimed Mr. Smith. "How is it," he asked, turning to the Russian ambassador, "that you Russians are not content with your vast empire, the most extensive in the world, stretching from the banks of the Rhine to the Celestial Mountains and the Kara-Korum, whose shores are washed by the Frozen Ocean, the Atlantic, the Mediterranean, and the Indian Ocean? Then, what is the use of threats? Is war possible in view of modern inventions—aspHYxiating shells capable of being projected a distance of 60 miles, an electric spark of 90 miles that can at one stroke annihilate a battalion; to say nothing of the plague, the cholera, the yellow fever, that the belligerents might spread among their antagonists mutually, and which would in a few days destroy the greatest armies?"

"True," answered the Russian; "but can we do all that we wish? As for us Russians, pressed on our eastern frontier by the Chinese, we must at any cost put forth our strength for an effort toward the west."

"O, is that all? In that case," said Mr. Smith, "the thing can be arranged. I will speak to the Secretary of State about it. The attention of the Chinese government shall be called to the matter. This is not the first time that the Chinese have bothered us."

"Under these conditions, of course—" And the Russian am-

bassador declared himself satisfied.

"Ah, Sir John, what can I do for you?" asked Mr. Smith as he turned to the representative of the people of Great Britain, who till now had remained silent.

"A great deal," was the reply. "If the Earth Chronicle would but open a campaign on our behalf—"

"And for what object?"

"Simply for the annulment of the Act of Congress annexing to the United States the British islands."

Though, by just turn-about of things here below, Great Britain has become a colony of the United States, the English are not yet reconciled to the situation. At regular intervals they are ever addressing to the American government vain complaints.

"A campaign against the annexation that has been an accomplished fact for 150 years!" exclaimed Mr. Smith. "How can your people suppose that I would do anything so unpatriotic?"

"We at home think that your people must now be sated. The Monroe doctrine is fully applied; the whole of America belongs to the Americans. What more do you want? Besides, we will pay for what we ask."

"Indeed!" answered Mr. Smith, without manifesting the slightest irritation. "Well, you English will ever be the same. No, no, Sir John, do not count on me for help. Give up our fairest province, Britain? Why not ask France generously to renounce possession of Africa, that magnificent colony the complete conquest of which cost her the labor of 800 years? You will be well received!"

"You decline! All is over then!" murmured the British agent sadly. "The United Kingdom falls to the share of the Americans; the Indies to that of—"

"The Russians," said Mr. Smith, completing the sentence.

"Australia—"

"Has an independent government."

"Then nothing at all remains for us!" sighed Sir John, downcast.

"Nothing?" asked Mr. Smith, laughing. "Well, now, there's Gibraltar."

With this sally the audience ended. The clock was striking twelve, the hour of breakfast. Mr. Smith returns to his chamber. Where the bed stood in the morning a table all spread comes up through the floor. For Mr. Smith, being above all a

practical man, has reduced the problem of existence to its simplest terms. For him, instead of the endless suites of apartments of the olden time, one room fitted with ingenious mechanical contrivances is enough. Here he sleeps, takes his meals, in short, lives.

He seats himself. In the mirror of the phonotelophote is seen the same chamber at Paris which appeared in it this morning. A table furnished forth is likewise in readiness here, for notwithstanding the difference of hours, Mr. Smith and his wife have arranged to take their meals simultaneously. It is delightful thus to take breakfast *tete-a-tete* with one who is 3000 miles or so away. Just now, Mrs. Smith's chamber has no occupant.

"She is late! Woman's punctuality! Progress everywhere except there!" muttered Mr. Smith as he turned the tap for the first dish. For like all wealthy folk in our day, Mr. Smith has done away with the domestic kitchen and is a subscriber to the Grand Alimentation Company, which sends through a great network of tubes to subscribers' residences all sorts of dishes, as a varied assortment is always in readiness. A subscription costs money, to be sure, but the *cuisine* is of the best, and the system has this advantage, that it does away with the pestering race of the *cordons-bleus*. Mr. Smith received and ate, all alone, the *hors-d'aevre*, *entrees*, *roti*, and *legumes* that constituted the repast. He was just finishing the dessert when Mrs. Smith appeared in the mirror of the telephone.

"Why, where have you been?" asked Mr. Smith through the telephone.

"What! You are already at the dessert? Then I am late," she exclaimed, with a winsome *naivete*. "Where have I been, you ask? Why, at my dress-maker's. The hats are just lovely this season! I suppose I forgot to note the time, and so am a little late."

"Yes, a little," growled Mr. Smith; "so little that I have already quite finished breakfast. Excuse me if I leave you now, but I must be going."

"O certainly, my dear; good-by till evening."

Smith stepped into his air-coach, which was in waiting for him at a window. "Where do you wish to go, sir?" inquired the coachman.

"Let me see; I have three hours," Mr. Smith mused. "Jack, take me to my accumulator works at Niagara."

For Mr. Smith has obtained a lease of the great falls of Niagara. For ages the energy developed by the falls went unutilized. Smith, applying Jackson's invention, now collects this energy, and lets or sells it. His visit to the works took more time than he had anticipated. It was four o'clock when he returned home, just in time for the daily audience which he grants to callers.

One readily understands how a man situated as Smith is must be beset with requests of all kinds. Now it is an inventor needing capital; again it is some visionary who comes to advocate a brilliant scheme which must surely yield millions of profit. A choice has to be made between these projects, rejecting the worthless, examining the questionable ones, accepting the meritorious. To this work Mr. Smith devotes every day two full hours.

The callers were fewer to-day than usual—only twelve of them. Of these, eight had only impracticable schemes to propose. In fact, one of them wanted to revive pointing, an art fallen into desuetude owing to the progress made in color-photography. Another, a physician, boasted that he had discovered a cure for nasal catarrh! These impracticables were dismissed in short order. Of the four projects favorably received, the first was that of a young man whose broad forehead betokened his intellectual power.

"Sir, I am a chemist," he began, "and as such I come to you."
"Well!"

"Once the elementary bodies," said the young chemist, "were held to be sixty-two in number; a hundred years ago they were reduced to ten; now only three remain irresolvable, as you are aware."

"Yes, yes."

"Well, sir, these also I will show to be composite. In a few months, a few weeks, I shall have succeeded in solving the problem. Indeed, it may take only a few days."

"And then?"

"Then, sir, I shall simply have determined the absolute. All I want is money enough to carry my research to a successful issue."

"Very well," said Mr. Smith. "And what will be the practical outcome of your discovery?"

"The practical outcome? Why, that we shall be able to produce easily all bodies whatever—stone, wood, metal, fibers—"

"And flesh and blood?" queried Mr. Smith, interrupting him.

"Do you pretend that you expect to manufacture a human being out and out?"

"Why not?"

Mr. Smith advanced \$100,000 to the young chemist, and engaged his services for the Earth Chronicle laboratory.

The second of the four successful applicants, starting from experiments made so long ago as the nineteenth century and again and again repeated, had conceived the idea of removing an entire city all at once from one place to another. His special project had to do with the city of Granton, situated, as everybody knows, some fifteen miles inland. He proposed to transport the city on rails and to change it into a watering-place. The profit, of course, would be enormous. Mr. Smith, captivated by the scheme, bought a half-interest in it.

"As you are aware, sir," began applicant No. 3, "by the aid of our solar and terrestrial accumulators and transformers, we are able to make all the seasons the same. I propose to do something better still. Transform into heat a portion of the surplus energy at our disposal; send this heat to the poles; then the polar regions, relieved of their snow-cap, will become a vast territory available for man's use. What think you of the scheme?"

"Leave your plans with me, and come back in a week. I will have them examined in the meantime."

Finally, the fourth announced the early solution of a weighty scientific problem. Everyone will remember the bold experiment made a hundred years ago by Dr. Nathaniel Faithburn. The doctor, being a firm believer in human hibernation—in other words, in the possibility of our suspending our vital functions and of calling them into action again after a time—resolved to subject the theory to a practical test. To this end, having first made his last will and pointed out the proper method of awaking him; having also directed that his sleep was to continue a hundred years to a day from the date of his apparent death, he unhesitatingly put the theory to the proof in his own person. Reduced to the condition of a mummy, Dr. Faithburn was coffined and laid in a tomb. Time went on. September 25th, 2889, being the day set for his resurrection, it was proposed to Mr. Smith that he should permit the second part of the experiment to be performed at his residence this evening.

"Agreed. Be here at ten o'clock," answered Mr. Smith; and

with that the day's audience was closed.

Left to himself, feeling tired, he lay down on an extension chair. Then, touching a knob, he established communication with the Central Concert Hall, whence our greatest *maestros* send out to subscribers their delightful successions of accords determined by recondite algebraic formulas. Night was approaching. Entranced by the harmony, forgetful of the hour, Smith did not notice that it was growing dark. It was quite dark when he was aroused by the sound of a door opening. "Who is there?" he asked, touching a commutator.

Suddenly, in consequence of the vibrations produced, the air became luminous.

"Ah! you, doctor?"

"Yes," was the reply. "How are you?"

"I am feeling well."

"Good! Let me see your tongue. All right! Your pulse. Regular! And your appetite?"

"Only passably good."

"Yes, the stomach. There's the rub. You are over-worked. If your stomach is out of repair, it must be mended. That requires study. We must think about it."

"In the meantime," said Mr. Smith, "you will dine with me."

As in the morning, the table rose out of the floor. Again, as in the morning, the *potage*, *aroti*, *ragouts*, and *legumes* were supplied through the food-pipes. Toward the close of the meal, phonotelephotic communication was made with Paris. Smith saw his wife, seated alone at the dinner-table, looking anything but pleased at her loneliness.

"Pardon me, my dear, for having left you alone," he said through the telephone. "I was with Dr. Wilkins."

"Ah, the good doctor!" remarked Mrs. Smith, her countenance lighting up.

"Yes, But, pray, when are you coming home?"

"This evening."

"Very well. Do you come by tube or by air-train?"

"Oh, by tube."

"Yes; and at what hour will you arrive?"

"About eleven, I suppose."

"Eleven by Centropolis time, you mean?"

"Yes."

"Good-by, then, for a little while," said Mr. Smith as he severed communication with Paris.

Dinner over, Dr. Wilkins wished to depart. "I shall expect you at ten," said Mr. Smith. "To-day, it seems, is the day for the return of life of the famous Dr. Faithburn. You did not think of it, I suppose. The awakening is to take place here in my house. You must come and see. I shall depend on your being here."

"I will come back," answered Dr. Wilkins.

Left alone, Mr. Smith busied himself with examining his accounts—a task of vast magnitude, having to do with transactions which involve a daily expenditure of upward to \$800,000. Fortunately, indeed, the stupendous progress of mechanic art in modern times makes it comparatively easy. Thanks to the Piano Electro-Reckoner, the most complex calculations can be made in a few seconds. In two hours Mr. Smith completed his task. Just in time. Scarcely had he turned over the last page when Dr. Wilkins arrived. After him came the body of Dr. Faithburn, escorted by a numerous company of men of science. They commenced work at once. The casket being laid down in the middle of the room, the telephone was got in readiness. The outer world, already notified, was anxiously expectant, for the whole world could be eye-witnesses of the performance, a reporter meanwhile, like the chorus in the ancient drama, explaining it all *viva voce* through the telephone.

"They are opening the casket," he explained. "Now they are taking Faithburn out of it—a veritable mummy, yellow, hard and dry. Strike the body and it resounds like a block of wood. They are now applying heat; now electricity. No result. These experiments are suspended for a moment while Dr. Wilkins makes an examination of the body. Dr. Wilkins, rising, declares the man to be dead. 'Dead!' exclaims every one present. 'Yes,' answers Dr. Wilkins, 'dead!' 'And how long has he been dead?' Dr. Wilkins makes another examination. 'A hundred years,' he replies."

The case stood just as the reporter said. Faithburn was dead, quite certainly dead! "Here is a method that needs improvement," remarked Mr. Smith to Dr. Wilkins, as the scientific committee on hibernation bore the casket out. "So much for the experiment. But if poor Faithburn is dead, at least he is sleeping," he continued. "I wish I could get some sleep. I am tired

out, Doctor, quite tired out. Do you not think that a bath would refresh me?"

"Certainly. But you must wrap yourself up well before you go out into the hall-way. You must not expose yourself to cold."

"Hall-way? Why, Doctor, as you well know, everything is done by machinery here. It is not for me to go to the bath; the bath will come to me. Just look!" and he pressed a button. After a few seconds a faint rumbling was heard, which grew louder and louder. Suddenly the door opened, and the tub appeared.

Such, for this year of grace 2889, is the history of one day in the life of the editor of the Earth Chronicle. And the history of that day is the history of 365 days every year, except leap-years, and then of 366 days—for as yet no means has been found of increasing the length of the terrestrial year.

HIEROGLYPHICS

by VINCENT STARRETT

The way that smoke twists upward in the sky:
The form a cloud takes slowly drifting by:
The dimness hanging over distant hills:
The shapes of snowflakes on the window sills:
The haunting faces flowers lift at dawn:
The furtive tears I find upon my lawn . . .
Little familiar things in alien guise
That overwhelm with exigent surmise.

The song a kettle sings upon the fire:
The solemn finger of a sudden spire:
The drone of bees and water faintly heard:
The silver query of a secret bird:
The gaze of friendly beast: a curious shell:
The second echo of a far off bell . . .
Tremendous trifles! Bell and wing and glow:
What do they mean? Something I almost know.

JOURNEY TO THE WORLD UNDERGROUND

(Being the Subterraneous Travels of Niels Klim)

From the Latin of LEWIS HOLBERG

(This early science-fiction novel, clearly inspired by Swift's *Gulliver's Travels*, is now over two centuries old, though it was first published in London by Thomas North in 1828.

(The story of Niels Klim begins with the narrator as a graduate of the University of Copenhagen taking ship for Bergen, Norway, in 1664. In his native country a cavern on the top of Mount Floien attracts his attention and he plans a descent into the cavern to learn its nature, if possible. Let down on a rope, the rope parts, and he begins to fall into darkness which is seemingly endless.)

I had now been plunging through thick darkness and incessant night for the space of a quarter of an hour, as near as I was able to guess whilst in such a perturbation; when, at length, I perceived a faint glimmering, much resembling a kind of twilight; and quickly afterwards, I could distinctly see a serene and bright firmament. I at first, in my simplicity, imagined that, either by the repercussion of the subterraneous air, or some such other adverse wind, I was again blown up; and that the hole, in sending forth its breath, had thrown me back upon the earth. But, as the sun, the firmament, and the stars, which I saw, were much smaller than those we are accustomed to behold, I was completely at a loss to assign a cause for this singular phenomenon. I then thought, that the whole of this new celestial constructure must either be produced by a dizziness in my head, and a confused imagination, arising from the perplexity of my disordered brain; or that I must be dead, and conveyed to the mansions of the blessed. This last ridiculous idea, however, I quickly detected, on perceiving myself armed with a boat-hook, and dragging a long rope after me, well conceiving that neither rope nor hook was a necessary appendage to possess on my arrival in Paradise; and that the celestial inhabitants could never possibly approve of such like ornaments, with which I might be inclined, after the example of the giants, to storm heaven, and drive away the gods. Some considerable time after, when I

had seriously reflected on the matter, I conceived that I must have descended to the subterraneous heavens; and that the opinions of those persons who maintain that the earth is hollow, and that within its shell there is another and a smaller world, with a smaller sun, smaller planets, and smaller stars, all in due proportion, connexion, and systematic arrangement, must be well founded. Events proved that I had conjectured right.

My course downwards having now continued pretty long, I began to experience that the rapidity with which I was at first precipitated, gradually abated as I approached the planet, or celestial globe, which I perceived soon after my accelerated descent. As I drew nearer, it appeared visibly to increase in bulk; so that at length I could discern, although through a cloudy atmosphere that surrounded it, both seas, hills, and valleys, upon its surface:

Like birds which hover round the muscle-clad rocks,
Or soar 'twixt mountains' pinnacles, or billows' tops,
Or on light wing flirt o'er the briny deep;
So, 'twixt earth and heaven, hung my body suspense.

I became now fully sensible that I was not only suspended and dangling in the celestial air, but that the perpendicular line, in which I had hitherto descended, was now changed into a circle. At this discovery I must acknowledge that my hair stood on end, fearing, as I did, that I must be metamorphosed either into a planet or a satellite, to be twirled round in perpetual motion until the world's end. When I considered, however, a little within myself, that my reputation and honour were in no wise likely to be tarnished through such a circumstance, and that a celestial globe, or at least the satellite of a celestial globe, always proceeding in planetary order, was, at any time, able to out-lustre and eclipse a poor hungry *Studiosus Philosophiae*, my spirits again revived; and the more so, when I experienced that the celestial air in which I hung, had so strongly fortified me against the cravings of nature, that I felt neither hunger nor thirst. I just then remembered that I had a biscuit in my pocket: I took it out, merely to try, out of curiosity, whether in that condition I could relish it; but on taking the first mouthful, I quickly perceived that all earthly food was become entirely nauseous; I therefore cast it from me, as a useless incumbrance. How great was my amazement on this occasion, when I discovered that the biscuit not only hung dangling in the air, but,—O

wonderful to relate!—began to describe around me a planetary orbit. This gave me a clear conception of the true laws of motion, according to which, all bodies placed in equipoise must move in circles.

How much soever I was dejected but a short time previous, at seeing myself a ball before mocking fate, I was now, on the other hand, equally elated on beholding myself exalted, not only to a self-subsistent planet, but to such a one even as would always be attended by a moon; and therefore ought to be ranked among stars of the first magnitude, or planets of the first order. In acknowledging the whole of my vain imbecility, I must needs say, that I was so immoderately inflated by this good fortune, that had I then met with all the burgomasters and all the senators of Bergen, I would merely have vouchsafed them a single glance, in order to have looked down upon them as insignificant atoms; nor would I have deigned to incline my hook, much less to bow my head, before them.

In this state I remained three whole days. As I was continually carried round by and with the planet, which was now at no very immense distance from me, I could easily distinguish the day from the night, through observing the rising and setting of the subterraneous sun; though, after he had gone down, I never remarked any such night as we experience on earth; for when this bright luminary was even far below the horizon, the heavens everywhere still continued light and shining, very similar to the full moon with us. This brightness, I concluded, must be reflected from the internal vault or hemisphere of this world; which borrowed its light from the sun placed in the centre. A superficial knowledge of astronomy assisted me in drawing this inference.

But the most ridiculous part of my conduct, whilst in the midst of enjoying this happy condition, perhaps, was, that I looked upon myself to be the next after the immortal gods; and as I considered myself in the quality of a new celestial light, I made my account of speedily being introduced, together with my satellite, into the catalogue of stars, by the astronomers upon the globe below;—when, lo! appeared a most hideous and terrific winged monster, which first threatened my right side, and then my left, now my front, and afterwards my rear, with the blow of annihilation. In the beginning, as it approached me, I took it to be one of the twelve signs of the Zodiac; and secretly wished in my

heart, if that really were the case, that it might be the Virgin; for, out of the whole constellation-system, no one, save her, could, in that solitude, show me the smallest particle of motherhood, or afford me the least consolation. As this creature, however, drew nearer to me, I perceived that it was neither more nor less than a huge and frightful griffin. I was, in consequence of this discovery, so stupefied, and so overtaken with fear, that I nearly forgot myself and my new celestial dignity; and, in my inexpressible anxiety and perplexity of mind, I drew out the testimonials I had received from the University, which, as good luck would have it to be, were then in my pocket, to exhibit to this dreadful menacing enemy, and to prove to him that I possessed both my theological and philosophical examen; was student, and, what is more, was *Baccalaureus*, and able to repulse any foreign adversary *in excipiendo forum*. As soon, however, as the first heat of my passion was over, I gradually recovered my reason, and laughed heartily at the folly of which I was guilty.

I could still not clearly perceive for what purpose this griffin followed me. I knew not whether to look upon him as an enemy or consider him as a friend; or to believe—which appeared very probable—that, merely to satisfy his curiosity, he was inclined to indulge himself a little in contemplating my form. True it is, that a human body, suspended in the air, with a boat-hook in his hand, and dragging a long rope after him, would be a sufficiently ludicrous sight to attract any man, or brute beast, to stop and gaze at it. The extraordinary figure that I then cut, occasioned, as I afterwards learnt, the inhabitants on my side of the planet, to hold divers controversial colloquies, and to form several hypotheses concerning me. The philosophers and astronomers took me to be a comet, and judged the rope to be the comet's tail. Many even insisted, that such an uncommon appearance in the heavens must certainly portend some imminent calamity, not short of pestilence, famine, or some other direful and remarkable event. Others again went much further,—even far beyond the possibility of observation,—and with much precision delineated my form; so that before my arrival on the globe, I was already defined, described, painted, and even engraved on copper.

All this I afterwards heard mentioned with inward merriment, and a sort of tickling delight, when I had been for some time upon the planet, and had learned the subterraneous language.

It is here worthy of being remarked, that there are in the interior of the earth certain extraordinary stars, which suddenly appear, and again as suddenly vanish; and which are denominated *Scissici* (or the hairy). They are described as being very hideous, with blood-red hair standing upright on their heads, similar to hogs' bristles, and having a tail much resembling a long shaggy beard; they are therefore reckoned by the natives, even as they would be with us, among the celestial wonders.

But to the history again. The griffin had now approached near enough to attack me with his wings; and was even on the point of assaulting me with his foot; so that I could plainly discern with what view he paid me a visit. I therefore commenced acting on the defensive against this formidable and warlike enemy; took the boat-hook in both my hands, and not only with it parried off his audacious attacks, but forced him even at times to retreat in haste; until at length, after many a fruitless blow, whilst he continued still to tug at me, I succeeding in passing the hook between his wings, and sticking it into the nape of his neck with such force, that I was unable to draw it out again. The wounded monster, with a frightful shriek, now hurried headlong down to the planet below; and I, who was already weary of, and disgusted with, my new celestial ostro-dignity,—perceiving that it, like every other greatness and excellence, was exposed to subversions and total decay,—

Now, with the griffin, which was earthward-bound,
Did carelessly descend. As from the astral throng
A lucid star doth seem to guide its course along
Th' ethereal vault,—thus sank I to the ground.

And in this manner was the circle which I had lately described once more changed into a perpendicular line.

After being carried down, in the beginning, somewhat violently against the thicker air, the whizzing whereof, for a length of time, completely stunned my hearing, I came with an easy and harmless fall down upon the globe, together with the griffin, who died soon after of his wounds.

When I arrived upon this planet, I judged it to be night, merely from the absence of the sun, and not from the darkness; for it was even then so light that I could distinctly read every letter in my testimonials. This nocturnal light is reflected from the firmament, or the innermost shell of our earth; the one half of which shines like our full moon. In respect of the brilliancy

of the light, there is, for the reason stated, scarcely any difference between day and night; except in so far, that the sun is away during the night, and on that account they are somewhat colder than the days.

My aerial voyage being ended, and I having now reached the planet both safe and sound, without even the most trivial hurt—since the speed with which the griffin in the beginning shot down, by degrees abated, as his strength grew weaker,—I lay for some time motionless on the ground, awaiting the arrival of day, to see what novelty might present itself to view. I now remarked that my former human weakness again began to manifest itself, and I felt come upon me both drowsiness and hunger; bitterly regretting that I had thrown away the biscuit. Wearied out with these, and a multitude of other troubles, I at length fell into a profound sleep.

I had reposed for the space of two hours, as near as I could guess, when a frightful growling, or lowing, which had long disturbed my slumbers, entirely awoke me. Whilst asleep, I had had many wonderful dreams. Among other strange things, I dreamed that I was again arrived in Norway; and was then engaged in relating to the people, in the streets and lanes, my marvellous adventures. I afterwards thought that I was in the church at Fanoe, not far from Bergen, and listening to the singing of the parish-clerk, Niels Anderson, whose croaking voice, as usual, miserably annoyed my acoustic organs. On awaking, for some time I really imagined that it was this man's howling which had interrupted my sleep. But as I at the same instant descried a bull standing very near to me, I concluded that it must have been his growling which had awaked me.

The day had dawned, and the rising sun began to gild the verdant oaks and fertile fields, which, in beautiful luxuriance and variety, everywhere spread and extended themselves before my astonished sight. I perceived, at no great distance, some few trees in a cluster; but how great was my amazement when I observed them moving to and fro, notwithstanding that it was so perfectly calm that there was not wind enough even to have moved a feather. Seeing the bull now come growling towards me, I fled in haste, quaking with fright, to a tree which was standing not far from me, and endeavored in my anxiety to ascend it. Scarcely, however, had I got rightly up, when it gave an effeminate, but shrill and piercing shriek, similar to that of an exasper-

ated woman; and I, at the same time, received such a violent box on the ear, that a dimness came immediately before my eyes, and I fell headlong to the ground. I lay as if entranced, or struck by lightning, and ready to yield up the ghost; when all around me I heard a buzzing and muttering noise, very like the hubbub in the buying and selling of stock. I opened my eyes,—as I was not dead,—and saw the field all about me swarming with trees; where, but a short time before, I had only remarked six or seven. Nothing could equal the amazement with which I was filled, on finding myself thus in the midst of a living forest; my head became dizzy, and I was ready to weep with terror and alarm. I at first thought I must be dreaming, notwithstanding I was perfectly awake. Then I imagined myself to be in the midst of an assemblage of apparitions, or surrounded by evil spirits; and divers other such like incoherencies entered my head. I had, however, but little time to contemplate the nature of, or meditate on the cause of, these automatons; for a second tree hastily approached me, bent down one of its branches, the extremity of which was armed with six twigs, that answered the purpose of fingers, raised me suddenly from the ground, and bore me away, in spite of all my piteous and doleful lamentations. Innumerable other trees, of various sorts and sizes, followed. They uttered certain articulate sounds, which to me were entirely foreign; and whereof I could only retain in my memory the two words, *Pikel Emi*—of which they made very frequent use. The signification of these words is, *an extraordinary baboon*; and such was the appellation they bestowed on me; as they concluded, from my shape and dress, that I must be a species of ape; although of a different kind from those apes which are common in their country. Several imagined me to be an inhabitant of the firmament, and conceived that the birds must have conveyed me thither; averring, that the annals of their planet could fully testify, that like circumstances had frequently happened before. All this came to my knowledge a few months after, when I had learned the subterraneous language.

In my present situation, I was so far from comprehending the nature of these living and speaking trees, that, through fright and consternation, I even nearly forgot my own. Just as little was I able to conceive, what this procession, which moved forward with slow solemn step, should betoken; though, from the hasty, and apparently indignant mumbling, muttering and grumb-

ling, which everywhere resounded through the field, I could not hope for much good. The offence with which I was charge, I concluded from the circumstancies, must really be well founded; for the tree, into which I, in my anxiety, when I fled from the bull, began to ascend, was neither more nor less than the Sheriff's wife of the neighbouring city. The injured person's dignified character, tended infinitely to add to the aggravation of my crime; for it appeared that I was inclined to violate the person, not of a woman of the lower order, but of a lady of the highest rank; and that, too, in the open field, and in the presence of divers eyewitnesses: an entirely new and horrid sight for such a modest, chaste, virtuous, and well-bred people as they are. At length we arrived in the city, whither I was brought a prisoner. The houses of it had the appearance, not only of magnificence, but its divisions, its streets and lanes, were distinguished for their evenness, order, and symmetry. All the buildings were so lofty and majestic, that they might be compared with so many towers or steeples. The streets swarmed with trees, all promenading, which in passing saluted each other by bowing their branches; and the lower they bent them, the greater was the proof of esteem, respect, and veneration. Just then there came, accidentally, out of a particularly magnificent house, a remarkably fine oak; when all the other trees immediately receded, bowing down, in like manner, most of their branches; from which one might infer, that it was more than an ordinary person. I discovered soon after, that it was the Sheriff of the city; the reputation of whose wife, it was alleged, I so greatly had injured. In the meantime, I was conducted into a saloon in the said Sheriff's house. As soon as I had entered, the door was locked after me, and strongly barricaded; on which occasion, I might have congratulated myself on being admitted a member of the Raspings-House (Bridewell). My fear respecting the not-to-be-envied situation wherein I was placed, was still the more confirmed, on my observing on the outside, in the front of the house, three trees walking to and fro, as guards; each being armed with six axes, one for every branch; for they possessed, in lieu of arms, so many branches, and in lieu of fingers, so many twigs. I remarked that on the top of each stem or trunk of the trees, a head was placed, which much resembled the human head; and underneath, instead of roots, they had each two legs, but so short, that tortoises might vie with the inhabitants of this planet in

running. It would have been an easy matter for me, in case I had not been incarcerated, to escape, if opportunity had offered; as I certainly was able to fly, in comparison with these runners.

In fine, not to detain the curious reader any longer, I now evidently perceived, that these trees were not only the inhabitants of this planet, but that they were also rational beings; and I admired the variety with which nature charms, in her multifarious and mutable forms in the creation. These trees are not near so tall as the trees with us, for the greater number do not exceed the height of a man; and some are even much shorter, which might be compared with flowers or plants: these I concluded must be children.

It is inconceivable into what a labyrinth of meditation these phenomena led my thoughts; how many sighs were extorted from my bosom, and with what painful hankering and longing, I, while in this condition, called to remembrance my beloved fatherland. Although these extraordinary trees appeared to be social beings, since they were gifted with the use of speech, and endowed with so much reason that they might be classed among rational animals, still I doubted whether they could be confronted with the human race; and at the same time feared that justice, benevolence, and such other mortal virtues, were entirely unknown to them. I was so completely absorbed in these tormenting reflections, that my bowels yearned, and tears started and ran down my cheeks in continual streams. Whilst I thus, in the most effeminate manner, was giving vent to my sorrow, and crouching under the weight of my afflictions, the guards, whom, because of the axes which they bore, I took to be lictors, entered my prison; whence I was conducted, preceded by them, to a distinguished building, situated in the centre of the market-place. I now looked upon myself in the light of one who had attained to the dignified office of dictator—more eminent than any Roman consul; for he was honoured only with twelve axes in his retinue, whilst I, on the contrary, advanced with eighteen preceding me. At the door of the edifice, whither I was conducted, stood *Justice*, carved out in the form of a tree, holding a balance in one of its branches. It was shaped after the figure of a virgin, with an air of importance and rigid inflexibility; and with a sharp and piercing look, whose mien was neither forbidding nor defying, but was distinguished by a certain mournful gravity. From this I concluded, without falling into error, that the building was the Town-Hall.

I was now led into the Justice-room, the floor of which was paved with quadrangular highly polished marble slabs of various colours. Here I perceived a golden chair, resembling a judgment-seat, upon which sat a tree exalted in the midst of twelve assessors, or benchers; who, in becoming and suitable order, were seated, in like manner, on so many lower chairs, six on each side of the Lord Chief Justice. This great personage was a palm-tree of the middle stature; but was distinguishable from the other judges by the variety of its leaves, which possessed every colour in nature. The whole were surrounded by four and twenty lictors, each of whom was armed with six axes. It is impossible for me to describe the terror and consternation into which I was thrown, on beholding these persons arrayed in such warlike and formidable order; concluding therefrom, that this nation must be excessively cruel and blood-thirsty.

On my entering the Justice-room, all the judges, senators, counsellors, and others, rose from their seats, and raised their branches high in the air; after which religious ceremony, they again seated themselves. This being finished, I was then arraigned at the bar, between two trees, the trunks of which were clad in sheep-skins. I conjectured that these must be the pleading barristers, which really proved to be the case.

Before the trial proceeded, the head of the Lord Chief Justice was enveloped in a sort of black covering. This being done, the accusing barrister, in opening the case, made a short speech, which he repeated three times; to which my advocate replied in a like manner, and equally concise. To these speeches followed a perfect silence. This having continued for about the space of half an hour, the Lord Chief Justice, after first suffering the envelope which covered his face to be taken away, rose from his seat, and lifting his branches towards heaven, pronounced, with much suspension of voice and great emphasis, some words, which I imagined to be the sentence against me. When he had delivered his speech, or address, I was immediately reconducted to my former prison; expecting that ere long I should receive a severe chastisement, in the form of a flogging on my bare posteriors, at the cart's tail.

In this, my solitary confinement, I reflected on all the events which had lately come to pass, and really inwardly ridiculed the folly and simplicity of this people; for that which they had recently been doing, seemed to me much more like performing

a farce than conducting a criminal process; and all that I had observed of their attitudes, gestures, ornaments, and mode of legal procedure, appeared to me more suitable for jugglers and ballet-dancers, than to be introduced into the solemn and most high court of judicature. I afterwards brought to mind the great difference between things here and on our globe; and was then,—and not till then,—fully sensible of the preeminence of the Europeans over all other human beings. Notwithstanding I condemned in my heart the stupidity, and pitied the intellectual deficiency, of this subterraneous nation, still I could not deny to them a rank above the brute creation; for the beautiful appearance of their city, the symmetry of the buildings, together with various other things which I observed, evidently proved, that these trees were neither entirely deficient in reason, nor totally ignorant of certain principal mechanical arts. I conceived, however, that that was all that I could fairly advance in their praise.

Whilst I, in this manner, was meditating, and talking softly to myself, the door of my prison was opened, and a male tree entered, having in his hand a triangular surgical instrument, with which he, after having unbuttoned my bosom and bared my arm, very skillfully made an incision, or rather, by act of pertusion struck a hole into the middle vein. When he had taken from me as much blood as he conceived enough, he again bound up the arm, with equal dexterity, surveyed the blood with much attention, and, whilst betraying evident signs of wonder and amazement, he went silently away. All this tended more and more to confirm the opinion I had formed of this people's disordered intellects. But some time after, when I had learned the subterraneous language, and acquired a clear conception of all these matters, my contempt for them was changed into admiration. The practice of the court of judicature, which I so inconsiderately had censured, was explained to me in the following way. From the shape of my body, as well as from my figure altogether, it was supposed that I was an inhabitant of the firmament. It appeared that I had attempted to violate the person of a modest and virtuous lady of the highest rank; and for that aggravated misdemeanor, of which all surmise judged me guilty, I was conducted to the senate-house. One of the pleading barristers had much exaggerated my offence;—maintaining that I ought to suffer the punishment which the law awards. The other, on the contrary, did not entirely deprecate the punishment; but suggested

and advised that it should be deferred, until it was fully ascertained who I was, whence I came, and whether I was of the brute creation or a rational being. The raising up of the branches toward heaven, I was informed, was a customary religious ceremony, which was always observed before the sentence was passed upon any delinquent. The pleaders were clothed in sheep-skins—emblematic of innocence—to remind them of the uprightness and integrity which they ought to exhibit in the treatment of any action at law. And really I remarked that all the barristers in this place were upright and irreproachable characters; a circumstance which clearly proves, that it is possible, in a well-regulated state, to find both honest and honourable advocates. The statutes in that country are so rigid against cavillers and misinterpreters, or perverters of the law, that no quirks, chicanery, insidiousness, or partiality, can be defended or palliated; no knavery or dishonesty can be deprecated; and no delinquent can escape punishment. It is as impossible for a criminal to elude pursuit, as it is for him to find a refuge, or a person willing to afford him harbour.

The three-fold repetition of their speeches, was in consequence of this people's peculiarly dull powers of apprehension, which distinguished them from every other nation upon that planet; for but very few of them possessed faculty sufficient to understand that which they had carelessly read, or to comprehend what they had only once heard related. It was looked upon, that those persons who were capable of immediately understanding a common proposition, must necessarily lack judgment; therefore, people of quick perceptive faculties were seldom or never selected for any great or important employment. Experience had taught them to know, that the republic had always been on the totter when under the administration of clever heads,—better and more generally known by the appellation of great geniuses,—and that men of a slow, or, as they were sarcastically denominated, of a dull apprehension, had invariably restored things to order, which the former had completely entangled. To these extraordinary opinions, I could at first by no means yield my assent; but, nevertheless, after serious reflection, they appeared not to be so entirely inconsistent. What excited my astonishment the most, was the history of the Lord Chief Justice. That personage was a virgin, who was born and educated in the place, and was appointed by the Regent to the office of *Kaki*, or Chief Judge of the

city. It must here be remarked, that this people, in nominating any person to fill a high public situation, never take the sex into account; but, after a strict examination of his or her abilities, confide the affairs of the state to the most worthy person among those, whose capacity has been brought under consideration and found appropriate to the task. In order to judge rightly of every one's qualifications and talents, seminaries are established, the superintendents or inspectors of which are called *Karatti*; which word, in their language signifies essayers or examiners. Their occupation is that of watching the progress in learning of every one under their care; of penetrating into, and examining strictly, the general state of the minds, and natural bent of the dispositions, of the young students; and afterwards to hold a Probation, and once a year to deliver to the Prince a designation of such as are qualified to fill public situations; distinguishing in which branch of education each person has made proficiency, and in particular excels, and in what employment he or she could be of the greatest advantage to the fatherland. After the Prince is put in possession of the list of candidates, he causes their names to be inscribed in a book kept for that purpose; so that he can daily call to mind, and have before his eyes, those whom he thinks meet to promote to the vacant situations.

The virgin above-mentioned, had, four years before, obtained the distinguishing and commanding attestation from the *Karatti*; and was, in consequence, appointed by the Prince to the office of Chief Judge in the senate—and that, too, of her native city; a practice which the inhabitants of Potu think very religiously of;—conceiving that no person can know the internal state and condition of a municipality so well as those who were born and brought up in the midst of it. Her name was Palmka; and had now for the space of three years discharged the duties of her office with such rigidity, that she had thereby attained to the highest degree of renown. She was everywhere looked upon as the most profoundly learned, wise, and judicious tree of the whole city; for her powers of apprehension were so extremely dull, that she hardly ever understood any case or subject,—and then not without much trouble and difficulty, unless it was repeated to her three or four times. But having once formed a conception of it, she, with surprising discernment, penetrated quickly to the bottom, decided the most difficult points, and solved the most

abstruse problems with so much judgment, that all her verdicts were considered as so many oracles.

Like Themis, she in the even balance poised
Preponderating justice against fraud;
And she distinguish'd truth's peculiar rays
From falsehood's borrow'd lustre,—goddess-like.

She, therefore, during the whole time she had filled her important situation, had never pronounced any decree, or passed any sentence, that was not extrolded to the skies, and confirmed by the Supreme Council of State in Potu.

This caused me to perceive, on a closer examination and reflection, that the Potuites, through not excluding the fair sex from office, howbeit, did not act so Bedlamish as I at first imagined. I thought to myself; suppose the Sheriff's wife of Bergen were to sit in judgment in the senate, instead of her husband; or counsellor Severin's daughter—a well-spoken, clever, and witty young lady—were to plead instead of her stupid and dolter-headed father; perhaps jurisprudence, by the bye, might not, in consequence, sustain any considerable loss, nor justice and equity so often fall into qualms and fainting fits.

I even went deeper in my meditations, and reflected on the precipitate dispatch used in our Courts of Justice in Europe—particularly in the Courts of Revision or Chancery,—and considered the expeditious manner wherein trials are frequently hurried through, and sentences passed; the latter of which, on a closer investigation of the relative matter, would, in all probability, run the risk of being annulled.

For their having proceeded to open one of my veins, in the manner already described, they gave the following reason. When any person is convicted of a crime, instead of flogging, maiming, or beheading such a malefactor, he is ordered to be bled; to ascertain whether the offense was committed with malice aforethought, or whether it was prompted by some irregularity in the blood, or disorder in the fluids of the body. If either, or both of the latter, a cure of the indisposition is endeavoured to be effected; in order that the legal process may have for its end, the more of reformation than of punishment: nevertheless, it is always considered an ignominy, to be sentenced by the Council to be phlebotomized. In case any one who has undergone this correction, should a second time be found guilty of any offence, he is then condemned as an unworthy member of the state, and

banished to the firmament; where all, without distinction, are admitted. Regarding the condition of this exile, I shall hereafter give some farther elucidation.

The cause of the surprise, which the surgeon who bled me exhibited, on beholding my blood, was, that the inhabitants of that planet, instead of blood, have a transparent whitish fluid in their veins; which, in proportion to the more or less whiteness that it possesses, is considered a greater or less indication of guilty, or purity and innocence.

Of all these matters, I formed a clear conception, when I had acquired a knowledge of the subterraneous language; and consequently began to entertain a more favourable opinion of this nation, which I inconsiderately had held in so much contempt. I remarked, that these trees, which in the beginning I took to be both stupid and clownish, had a moderately good colouring of humanity about them; I therefore felt no apprehension for the safety of my life; and became the more confirmed in the confidence I entertained, on seeing them twice a day bring me something to subsist upon. My food consisted, generally, of fruit, herbs, and all sorts of beans; and my drink was a clear, sweet, and exceedingly delicious juice.

The Sheriff, in whose house I remained a prisoner, caused it to be immediately communicated to the Prince, who resided at his palace not far from the city, that he, by accident, had become possessed of a rational animal, of a most extraordinary shape and species. This information, as it may be imagined, naturally excited the curiosity of his illustrious Highness. He commanded the Sheriff, first to have me instructed in the language of the country, and then to send me to the palace. I was therefore immediately provided with a master; under whose instructions I made such progress, as to be able, in the short space of half a year, to converse pretty fluently with any of the inhabitants. As soon as I had acquired the rudiments of the language, a fresh order arrived from the Court, saying, that my instructions should be continued, and that I should be placed in the Seminary of the City; where the *Karatti* were to examine my intellectual powers, and judge in which art or science I gave the greatest hopes of advancement. The commands of the Prince were punctually obeyed. During the time that I was at the seminary, there was as much care bestowed in the formation of my body, as that of my mind; and they gave themselves, in particular, a great deal

of trouble to make me look as much like a tree as possible; for which purpose they bound false branches to different parts of my body, in so neat and dexterous a manner, that it was really a pleasure to behold their admirable contrivance.

In the meantime, my landlord, a very affable, communicative, and inquisitive sort of a tree, entertained me every afternoon, when I had returned from the seminary, with divers amusing historical tales; and various dialogues we held, wherein he interrogated me on almost every subject. He listened with much pleasure and attention to what I related to him respecting my voyage down; but at nothing was he so much amazed, as at the description I gave him of our earth, and of the immeasurable heavens that surround it, swarming and glittering with innumerable stars. All this awoke in him the most lively eagerness and curiosity. When, however, I related to him, that the trees with us were lifeless, immovable, and rooted in the ground, he appeared very dejected; and on my assuring him, that on our earth we felled them for firewood, wherewith to warm our houses, and cook our victuals, he then became nearly frantic. Nevertheless, when he had seriously reflected on the matter, his passion and indignation abated; then raising his branches, which amounted to five, towards heaven, he praised the wonderful judgment of the great Creator, into whose manifold and deep designs no mortal could penetrate. He now again listened calmly and attentively to what I further related. His wife, who had hitherto always avoided my presence, became, on understanding fully the reason of my being arraigned at the bar of the tribunal, again reconciled to me; and she acquitted me of all suspicion, when she learnt that I, in the innocence of my heart, had been deceived by the figure of a tree, up into which we, in our country, unceremoniously climb. But in order not to run any risk, in this newly acquired confidence and familiarity, of opening a very lately healed sore, and thereby losing her ladyship's good graces, I took special care never to converse with her, unless in the presence of her husband, and with his permission.

During the period which was appointed for my receiving instructions at the seminary, my landlord used frequently to take me round in the city, for the purpose of showing me everything that was uncommon and worthy of notice. We perambulated the streets without experiencing the least hinderance, or stoppage; and, what much surprised me, without causing the smallest con-

course of curious spectators. We are all aware, that with us things are far otherwise; for at every opportunity to witness a trivial, and almost everyday occurrence, the populace flock together by thousands, in order to satisfy their so-easily-excited curiosity. The inhabitants, however, of this planet, who are quite the reverse of us, appeared as much attached to stale matters of moment, as to new trinkets or gewgaws.

Keba, which is the name of this city, is the second in size in the principality of Potu. The inhabitants of this town are so much distinguished for their serious deportment, gravity, and sobriety of mind, that each of the citizens might pass for a counsellor, or senator. To old age is paid here, in particular, the greatest honour and respect; and in no place in the world are old people—to whose opinions, nay, to whose very wink the youth of Potu do every homage—more highly esteemed and venerated. I wondered, therefore, the more, that so sedate and temperate a people should be addicted to gaming, or have the least taste for plays, or any sort of theatrical diversions; which to me appeared entirely inconsistent with their natural gravity. My landlord, who perceived my astonishment, endeavoured, by all the means in his power, to abate it. “We have,” said he, “throughout every part of this principality, a custom of varying alternately our serious occupations and recreative amusements:—

Our duty done, we then our harmless sports pursue,

To renovate our strength, to do our task anew.”

For amongst other excellent regulations in this country, to the inhabitants permission is granted, for their enjoying every sort of amusement, by which it is thought the mind is invigorated and made more fit for laborious occupations; without mentioning that such like diversions, practiced in moderation, have always the effect of driving away melancholy; which is not unfrequently the mother of sedition, rebellion, and a number of desperate schemes of opposition to legitimate power. For this reason, they were accustomed, after their serious occupations, to recreate themselves with plays and other amusements; but with so much caution and circumspection, that they never suffered their gravity to degenerate into austerity, nor their gaiety into wantonness. How much soever I was delighted with all this, I became equally gloomy, on learning that disputations formed part of their theatrical entertainments. At certain appointed times of the year, after wagers being first made, and a stated premium set forth

for him who should be declared the conqueror, the two persons destined to dispute or wrangle, advanced and publicly challenged each other, like boxers, to a trial of their respective merits; and suffered themselves to be incited, and set together by the ears, in nearly the same way as game cocks, or other quarrelsome and fighting animals, are egged on with us. It is the general fashion there, among the rich, to keep disputants or wranglers; whom they train up in a manner similar to that used here on earth, in breaking in dogs of the chase. They are instructed in the science of sophistry or dialectics, in order to acquire a glibness of tongue and a flippant loquacity, which are requisite at this annually appointed contest. A certain rich citizen of the place, whose name was *Hennoki*, had, through this means, amassed an immensity of wealth; and had gained, in the space of three years, by the victories of the disputant whom he supported, no less than a sum of four thousand *rickatu*. Several persons, who, in like manner, had scraped together enormous heaps of money, had, at different times, offered him vast sums for this disputant; but hitherto he had not been induced to part with a treasure, which yielded him annually such a considerable income. The wrangler who is now the subject of remark, possessed such a coarse, rustic, unpolished volubility of tongue, that with the greatest facility he could advance a proposition, confute it, and again establish it; could make that which was crooked appear perfectly straight; and what was square, to assume the form of a circle. He was such a troublesome, brow-beating caviller, who laid about him so forcibly with syllogisms, dialectical chicaneries, shifts, and sophistry, that the bellowing noise of his distinguishing, subsuming, and limiting, had the wonderful effect of making all his opponents as silent as stock-fish. With inward affliction of soul, I was a few times spectator, and one of the auditory of these performances; which to me appeared both unbecoming and even wicked, in consequence of those sacred and honourable exercises, which are so great an embellishment to our universities, being changed into mere theatricals and stage tricks; and when I called to mind, that I myself had wrangled three times publicly, and had gained thereby much applause, and acquired a high reputation, I could scarcely refrain from weeping with vexation. I was, however, not near so much offended with the matter itself, as with the manner in which the performances were conducted; for on such occasions, certain inciters, who are called

Kabalki, on perceiving that the vehemence of the disputants began to flag, pricked them in the side with a kind of awl, to animate and encourage them anew. I pass over several other circumstances and facts, which I blush but to think of; and which I could do no less than condemn in so enlightened a people as this in reality is.

Besides these wranglers, whom they ironically call *Masbaki*, or Brothers of a Kidney, several kinds of four-footed animals, both wild and tame, as well as many birds of prey, are kept; which for money, in like manner, are suffered and incited to fight for the diversion of the spectators. I asked my landlord how it was possible, that so judicious and discreet a nation could abolish, for the sake of such gambling combats, those noble exercises; whereby the understanding is sharpened, truth discovered and elicited, and every one taught to speak in courteous language, and to converse with ease and affability? He answered me, that in barbarous times, such exercises as I alluded to were held in great esteem; but as experience had long since demonstrated, that they served much more to conceal truth, make youth wanton, excite disturbances, and prove prejudicial to the attainment of more useful knowledge, the Academy had thought proper to change them for plays or comedies; and the result had already shown, that the students had thereby advanced much further in erudition, than by quiet reading and tranquil meditation. With this answer, although it appeared clever and sensible enough, yet, for all that, I felt in my mind by no means satisfied.

In this city there is established for the rest of the people a Gymnasium, or Academy, in which the liberal arts are taught with more gravity and decorum. My landlord conducted me, one solemn festival day, to the high school's auditory, at the time of creating a *Madik*, or professor of philosophy. The business proceeded without the least ceremony; except in so far, that the candidate held a neat and well-grounded discourse on a certain physical problem; whereupon he became inscribed, by the President of the Academy, as one of their number; and received a license to teach publicly. After our return home, when my landlord asked me how I liked this manner of obtaining promotion, I answered him, that it appeared to me, in respect to themselves, much too dry and insipid. I related to him, that with us the *Magistri* and doctors were obliged to wrangle previous to their being created to those dignities; at which information

he wrinkled up his nose in a very strange sort of way. He then inquired of me, not without a degree of contemptuousness, regarding the nature of these disputations; in what way they were maintained; and wherein they differed from others in an ordinary way? I told him, that they in general treated on matters of the greatest importance; particularly on such as regarded the manners, language, and dress, of two ancient nations, which had flourished conspicuously in Europe in days of yore. I assured him, that I, myself, in three very learned disputations, had said and maintained, all that I conceived could be said and maintained, respecting the slippers belonging to these said two ancient nations. On hearing me utter these words, he burst into so immoderate a fit of laughter, that it echoed through the whole house. His wife, when she heard these roars of mirth, came hobbling to us with all speed, curious to know what circumstance could possibly occasion them; but I was so provoked at this behaviour altogether, that I did not deign to make her any reply: for who could endure to hear so momentous an affair treated with contempt and laughter? Her husband explained to her the whole cause of this conclusive burst of risibility, and she laughed at it, to my inward mortification, as heartily and equally as loud as my landlord himself.

It was not long before these historical facts were spread through the whole city; where they furnished matter for incessant sarcasms. Among other persons, there was the wife of a certain great senator, by nature of so very sprightly and merry a disposition, that she, on hearing of the circumstances, fell into so violent a laughing fit, that she nearly burst her sides; and in consequence of her dying of a fever some time after, it was everywhere muttered and whispered, that the immoderate paroxysm of laughter, through attacking and over-straining her lungs, drove, as the saying is, a nail into her coffin. This rumour was, however, only a mere and loose conjecture; for no one knew rightly of what disease she died. For the rest, she was an excellent wife, and a dignified and majestic housekeeper; for she possessed no less than seven branches: an extraordinary number for one of her sex; for which reason, every feeling, decent, and well-bred tree was greatly concerned for her death. She was interred at night, on the outside of the walls of the city, in the same dress that she wore at the time of her decease; for it is, by express law, here prohibited to bury any dead within the city;

as it is thought that the air would become thereby charged with infectious vapours, exhaled from the inhumated bodies. It is likewise forbidden to apparel dead corpses in costly attire, and to make therewith a pompous and magnificent funeral procession; as they become, very soon after, in spite of all such useless expenses, food only for worms. With these different regulations, I must acknowledge, I was well pleased. It is a custom here to hold funeral orations, and to preach funeral sermons; but these consist in mere exhortations, addressed to the auditory, to lead honest and virtuous lives, and to keep mortality constantly in view. There are, on such occasions, censors appointed, whose business it is to take note of how far the merits of the deceased are panegyrized, beyond a strict adherence to the principles of truth. It must here be observed, that a severe punishment is inflicted upon him who exaggerates, or invents any praise, reputation, or honour; therefore, nowhere are eulogies and panegyrics bestowed more sparingly than in Potu. Being, myself, a short time after, one of the auditory of such a funeral oration, I inquired of my landlord respecting the rank and station of the deceased hero, whose memory was honoured in so solemn a manner? He answered me, that it was a peasant, who had been sent on an errand to the city, and had suddenly died on the road. How much soever the subterraneous people had ridiculed me but a short time before, I now in turn ridiculed them again with a loud and violent fit of laughter; and on that occasion I requited their sarcasms, vented against us Europeans, with more than standard weight. "A peasant?" bawled I, "wherefore then are not also oxen, bulls, et cetera, the companions and colleagues of the peasants, in like manner panegyrized from the public rostrum? As they are employed in similar occupations, they are capable,—are they not?" said I, "of furnishing like matter for a funeral oration?" But my landlord chid me, and bade me keep my laughter within the bounds of decorum; informing me, at the same time, that the husbandmen, or tillers of the ground, were there held in the greatest esteem, in consequence of their useful and important employment; and that no rank, or station in life was, in that country, considered more noble and honourable than that of the peasantry; for which reason everyone in that condition, who laboured as an honest and upright father of a family, was greeted by the people of the towns, with the honourable appellation of Nourisher and Protector. Hence arises the custom, in

the beginning of harvest-time, or in the palm-month, when the peasants come to the city with a great number of wagons, laden with provisions, of their being received, on the outside of the gates, by the municipal authorities, under the sound of trumpets and cymbals, and conducted into the town with triumphal joy and merriment. I cannot express the astonishment I felt on hearing this account; particularly, when I reflected on the fate of our peasantry, who are but scoffed at, while held in a galling state of vassalage; and whose occupations are esteemed both mean and despicable, when contrasted with those, which luxury, prodigality, and voluptuousness, have introduced upon the stage of the world: I mean those of cooks, pastry-cooks, confectioners, hair-dressers, dancing-masters, and innumerable others. This I related to my landlord some time after; but with a strict injunction upon him, to observe th most inviolable secrecy; for fear that the subterraneous people should entertain too unfavourable an opinion of my brother Europeans above ground. He assured me that no tree would ever obtain the knowledge of it from his lips. He then conducted me up into the auditory, where a funeral oration was to be pronounced. I must candidly avow, that I never, on a like occasion, heard any discourse so well-grounded, so appropriate, so full of veracity, and so free from every kind of hypocrisy, as that; which appeared to me a perfect pattern, whereby all preachers of funeral sermons ought to regulate themselves. The orator gave first a delineation of the virtues of the deceased; he enumerated all his vices and frailties; concluding his discourse with an admonition to the auditory to guard themselves against the latter.

As we were returning home from hearing this oration, we met a criminal, conducted by three watchmen or guards. He had lately, pursuant to the sentence of the Lord Chief Justice, undergone the arm-punishment (as the already-mentioned phlebotomizing is called), and was then on his way to the common hospital of the town. I inquired wherein consisted the nature of his crime; and was answered that he had dared publicly to examine, and expose to consideration, God's nature, quality, and attributes—a thing totally forbidden throughout this country; where all such like unseasonable treatises and dissertations are considered so foolhardy and impertinent, that it is thought they can only be engendered and fostered in disordered intellects. It is therefore a practice here, to send such subtle disputants, after having first

bled them, to the madhouse, or bridewell, until their sound reason again returns. I thought to myself—Heaven and earth! how would matters go in Europe with our theologians, who are every other day wrangling about the quality and attributes of the Deity; and concerning the nature of ghosts, and other similar mysterious secrets? How might it also go with our learned in the metaphysics, who, proud of their own transcendent proficiency in the speculative examination, believe, far above the conception of other folks, to approach the omniscience of the God-head? Verily I fear, that instead of acquiring a critic's celebrity, and attaining to the dignity of a doctor's cap, with which such erudities are crowned with us, they would here only pave themselves a way to the lunatic hospital, or the house of correction.

These, and many other of the like kind of absurdities and incongruities, I took notice of, during the period that I was at the seminary. At length the time arrived, which was appointed by the Prince for my being furnished with the testimonials from the instructors, and sent to the Court. I made sure account of receiving the warmest praise, and the most glittering commendation; grounding this hope, partly upon my own aptness, as I had learned the subterraneous language much sooner than I expected,—partly upon the friendship of my landlord,—and partly upon the proclaimed candour, and uprightness of my judges. At length my testimonials were brought to me. On opening them I trembled with joy; eager to read, with my own eyes, the honour to which I had attained, and therefrom conjecture the good fortune that awaited me. But how much was I irritated and thrown into a state of despondency, when I had finished reading the document; of which the following is a copy!—

“Pursuant to the commands of your Serene Highness, we here-with forward the present animal; which some time ago, was brought hither down to us from another globe; and who calls himself, Man. We have, with diligent attention and solicitude, instructed the said animal in our Royal School; where, after as rigid and precise an examination as was possible to be made of his understanding and conduct, we found him very tractable and ready at learning; but of so wry and pitiful a penetration, that he, by reason of his too hasty conception, can hardly be classed among rational creatures; much less be intrusted with any important employment. As he is, however, much nimbler-footed than most other of the inhabitants of this country, we humbly

conceive, that he is exceedingly well qualified to fill the situation of Courier to the Court. Given under our hands, in the Thorne-month, at the Seminary in Keba, by your Serene Highness' most obedient and most dutiful servants.

NEHEK
JOKTAN
RAPASI
KILAK."

At this I went weeping to my landlord; and supplicated him, with tears in my eyes, to obtain, through the means of his influence, a milder attestation from the *Karatti*; and I entreated him to show them the testimonials I had received from the university of Copenhagen; wherein I was represented as a very excellent and distinguished student. He observed to me, that my testimonials might be good enough in our country above; where perhaps the shadow was more looked upon than the substance, and the rind more than the heart or marrow; but with them, where things were estimated by their quintessence, or very kernels, such like documents were considered of no kind of worth. For the rest, he advised me to bear my fate with patience; particularly as my character neither deserved reproof nor could be altered; since it is reckoned here as one of the greatest of crimes, to praise any person for virtues which he never possessed. By way of pouring some soothing balsams into my wounds, and consoling me in the best manner his ability would allow, he repeated to me the following words; the whole force of the truth whereof, penetrated deep into my heart.

Strive never after that, which is believ'd
By none but blind and silly mortals, to
Afford to him, whom only fools call great,
An inward gladness; and whose glitter is
Desir'd and envied by stupidity
Alone. Too oft, alas! is wisdom seen
To tower high upon the surgy wave
Of power; and like a ship, o'er taken by
A storm, is driven from her course and wreck'd.
And he, who with high titles and with gold
Is heavy laden, gliding, as he thinks
Secure, through life, is oft oblig'd beneath
The pond'rous weight to crouch,—then sinks unto
The ground. And they who strive to heap up treasure,

And eager are to gain distinguish'd rank,
Like lofty pyramids their piles they build,
Towering high, near to the very clouds;
But transitory is this power of wealth,
And fleeting is the greatness of their name;
And they, while in the zenith of their pride,
Not thinking on what slipp'ry ground they stand,
Are oft-times, when perhaps they least expect,
Hurl'd headlong from their golden glory's summit.

He added, that a person, with a moderate share of good luck, had not, in a more humble station of life, such downfalls to apprehend. He insisted that my testimonials from the *Karatti* were exactly what they ought to be; and that these honest and upright judges, possessing such a power of penetration, who never suffered themselves to be bribed with presents, nor moved by threats, to swerve one iota from the path of truth, could not, in this case, be suspected of partiality. He told me at last, without any reserve, that he, himself, had, for a length of time, taken particular notice of my very weak discerning faculties; and that, from my quick conceptions and fertile memory, he had instantly concluded, that I was by no means qualified for making any great spring towards pushing my fortune; but, on the contrary, in consequence of my miserable judgment, I was totally unfit for any office of importance. He mentioned also, that he had made another discovery, on hearing my recitals respecting Europeans, that my native country must be

A very crazy land, envelop'd in thick fogs,

Where nought but fools are bred, as senseless as are hogs.

He assured me, however, in the most condescending and polite manner, that I might depend upon his friendship; advising me, at the same time, to prepare myself, without delay, for setting out.

I followed this very good and reasonable man's advice. So much the more readily, as necessity demanded it; and it appeared a foolhardihood to oppose the Prince's commands. I therefore set out on my journey in the company of a few small trees; who, at the same time with myself, were prepared at the seminary; and with a similar view were sent to the capital. Our guide was an old *Karatti*, or overseer; who rode upon an ox, as he was unable to walk, in consequence of his advanced age. Riding,

in this country, is everywhere very unusual; and it is only decrepit old men, and sick persons, who make use of that convenience: although there would be much more excuse for the inhabitants of this planet being driven about in carriages, than for us; as they move so slow and with so much difficulty.

This brings to mind with what laughter the Subterraneans attended to the description I once gave them, respecting the costly equipages displayed among us: of our relays; our basket-work, and gilt gingerbread-looking carriages and boxes; in which we are oft packed together like pilchards in a cask, and driven about the town. And it calls, in particular, to my recollection, the time when I related to them, that in Europe, one neighbour could not visit another, without being enclosed in such a box car; and in this manner, by two high-spirited animals, drawn through almost every street and lane in the city: for no other earthly purpose, than a wish to display their outside finery.

In consequence of the very slow pace of these rational trees, we spent three days on the road, in travelling to the capital; although the distance from Keba is not more than twenty-eight miles. Had I been alone, I could easily have made the journey in a day.

How much soever I felt delighted, at being, beyond all comparison, nimbler a-foot than the Subterraneans, I, on the other hand, in an equal degree regretted that my bodily perfection should procure me such a despicable employment. "I wish," said I to myself, "that I was just as awkward and as clumsy on my legs as the inhabitants of this planet; in order, through such a defect, to escape the slavish and abject office to which I am likely to be appointed." "Don't say so!" exclaimed our guide, who overheard me; "don't say so; for if nature had not, with that corporeal superiority, in some measure compensated for the imperfections of your mind, we should all have looked upon you as an incumbrance upon the face of the earth; since, by reason of your untimely quick conception, you only see the outside shell of any thing, without discovering its kernel; and as you possess only two branches, you are much inferior to each of the Subterraneans, in ability to perform any handicraft, of whatsoever kind it might be." I listened to these words with much attention; and then thanked God for giving me my long legs; for without them, I should hardly have been reckoned among rational beings.

During our journey to the capital, I remarked, not however without astonishment, that not one of the inhabitants, as we passed by, remained stationary, in order to contemplate us; Nor did any of them leave their work to gaze at a sight, which, howbeit, was not seen every day, so wholly intent were they upon their business. But as soon as the day was closed, and every one had performed his office, they amused themselves with all kinds of diversions, by permission of the magistrates; who look upon such like innocent amusements to be strengthening both to the mind and body, and equivalent to eating and drinking. For this and other reasons, the journey was exceedingly pleasant. The country, everywhere, afforded delightful and enchanting prospects. Let the reader only picture to himself, an amphitheatre as beautiful as nature can form it, and he will then have some conception of the charming appearance of this subterraneous land. In some few tracts of country, where nature had been less bountiful, the defect was compensated by art, and by the labour of the inhabitants. It is customary for the constituted authorities to set forth encouraging rewards, to be paid to those persons who cultivate, improve, and beautify their rural possessions; and, on the other hand, those against whom it is proved, that they have neglected the cultivation of their land, are, by an existing law, deprived of their burgherright. We passed, in our way, through several handsome villages, which lay so near to one another, that they appeared to compose one very large town. Neatness and order everywhere prevailed. On the road we were often attacked by the wild baboons, which ran and frolicked on all sides of us in considerable numbers. They seemed particularly attached to springing upon, and tugging and pinching me; which arose, no doubt, in consequence of my very uncommon shape, and their mistaking me for one of their comrades. I was not able to conceal my wrath and indignation on this occasion; especially when I perceived that the sport afforded the trees that accompanied me, much matter for laughing at my expense; for I was conducted to the Court, pursuant to the Prince's commands, in the same dress I wore when I descended to the planet: holding the boat-hook in my right hand, that His Serene Highness might see the manner in which the people on our globe are equipped and clothed; and to show the condition I was in, and the ornaments I possessed, when I was precipitated into this territory. I considered it fortunate that I had taken the boat-hook with me; for

it came very opportunely, wherewith to drive away the audacious baboons, which flocked around me in troops: but it did not help me much; for the more I put them to flight, the more they returned so that every minute, during the whole journey, I was obliged to hold myself in readiness to give the enemy battle.

(There follows a lengthy description of the Prince's Court in Potu. Klim describes a state dinner, tells something of himself, and experiences several adventures in the course of serving four years as a messenger. During his years as a messenger, he has opportunity to observe "the state of the country, the conditions, habits, and manner of life, of the inhabitants" which he now proceeds to relate.)

The principality of Potu is confined within very narrow limits, and occupies only a small place upon this globe. The whole planet Nazar contains not more than one thousand to twelve hundred miles in circumference. A person may easily perambulate it without the help of a guide or interpreter, for the same language is spoken throughout every part; although the inhabitants of Potu differ so widely from those of the other states and provinces, in knowledge and manners. Like the Europeans on our globe, the Potuites have precedence of every other nation; and after the same manner, they are more renowned for their virtues and understanding than any other people. Upon the high roads are placed, at certain distances, stone pillars, which show the miles; and to these pillars are fixed projecting hands, or other marks, which point out the way to every market-town and village; for the whole principality abounds with villages and magnificent towns. But what I consider here as very remarkable, nay very wonderful, is, that all the inhabitants upon this planet speak one universal language; although every individual nation differs so exceedingly from the rest in condition, customs, manners, knowledge, and endowments of nature. In this respect, the subterraneous planet is a lively picture of the variety in nature, which cannot fail to charm and enrapture the travelling spectator.

The land is divided by great and small waters; in which ships are navigated with the help of oars, which are exercised, as one may say, by a magic power; for they are not, like our oars, plied by human hands, but by very ingenious self-moving machines. The disposition and ingenuity of these admirable ma-

chines I am not able to explain, as I am but very little versed in mathematics. Independent of that, these trees are so acute and so clever in all their inventions, that unless a person possess the eye of an Argus, and an almost divine understanding, he cannot discover the principle on which they are contrived.

Their planet, like our earth, has a twofold motion, so that the time with them, as it is with us, is divided into day and night, spring and summer, autumn and winter; and those places which are situated nearest the Poles, are colder than the others. But in respect of the light, for the reason already mentioned, there is scarcely any difference betwixt day and night. Nay, it may be truly said, that the night is more agreeable than the day; for nothing can be imagined more glittering and dazzling than the light of the sun, which is reflected from the solid hemisphere, that resembles an excessively large moon covering the whole celestial vault. The inhabitants consist of sundry sorts of trees; as oaks, limes, poplars, and palm-trees, thorns, and such like; whence the six months, into which the subterraneous year is divided, derive their names. Every sixteenth month the planet *Nazar* returns to the place whence it set out; but not on any fixed day, on account of the inequality of its motion; for this planet, like our moon, through the variety of its motions, jostles against, and breaks the heads of all those who reside in the firmament. Their chronologies are various, and are determined by the most remarkable events; especially by the appearance of a great comet, which, according to their opinions, three thousand years before, occasioned a general deluge; in which all the generations of the trees, together with the other remaining animals, were drowned, some few excepted, that were fortunate enough to save themselves upon high hills, and the tops of mountains, from the universal inundation; and from these are descended the present inhabitants.

This land abounds in grain, herbs, and all sorts of vegetables; and produces nearly the same fruit as we find in our Europe; but it yields no oats, which is a matter of little consequence, for they are here not wanted, as on this planet there are no horses. The seas and lakes yield excellent fish, and their margins are studded with the most beautiful country seats and villas—sometimes in connected rows, and then again scattered at different distances in the most charming variety. The common beverage of the inhabitants is prepared from certain herbs, which grow

green, and may be gathered all the year round. Those persons who sell this beverage, are generally called *Minhalpi*, that is, herb-brewers. They are limited to a certain number in each town, and have, exclusively, the privilege of decocting these herbs. Those who have obtained this license are not allowed to follow other employment, trade, or profession. All persons holding public situations, and receiving salaries, are particularly prohibited from engaging in this branch of commerce; for it is thought, that, on account of their credit and influence in the town, they would have it in their power to monopolize all the custom; and by means of the advantage which they enjoy in the state, they could afford to dispose of their merchandise at a lower price than other people. This we too frequently observe to be the case in our world; where men in office, and others receiving public pay, quickly enrich themselves by means and practices, to the great injury of the merchant and the fair trader.

There exists on this planet a very beneficial law regarding the procreation of children, which tends greatly to promote population. It augments and decreases the immunities and advantages which a man has in the state, according to the number of children whereof he is the father. In this wise, he who is the parent of six children, is exempt from all ordinary and extraordinary taxes. Therefore the begetting of children, and having a numerous progeny, is not less beneficial in the subterraneous world, than it is injurious and burdensome upon our globe, where it is customary to lay a poll-tax upon all infants.

In the subterraneous world, no person can hold two situations at the same time; for it is thought that a man has always enough to do in performing correctly the duties of one office. For that reason, public business is managed—under favour of the inhabitants of our globe be it spoken—much better here than with us. This law and regulation is attended to so strictly, that a physician never studies the whole science of medicine at once; but confines himself to the acquiring an accurate knowledge of the nature of one single disease; and a musician never learns to play on more than one instrument. Things are ordered quite otherwise in our world, where these various avocations prove hurtful to a man's nature; make him peevish, captious, and negligent in his occupations; and where, through a desire of being skilled in every thing, he, in truth, is skilled in nothing. If a physician were to undertake, at the same time, to cure a disease in the human

body as well as in the body politic, he would prove himself a bungler in both, and would effect neither; and if a musician were to set himself up for a virtuso and a senator, what could one expect from him but insipidity and discords? We are apt to admire those who venture to undertake several employments at the same time; who intrude themselves into the most important affairs, and are presumptuous enough to think themselves fit for any situation. This, which is caused by their temerity and slender knowledge of their own abilities, they were so foolish as to admire; for if they knew the importance of the office, and their own incapacity to direct it, they would not only decline accepting these situations, when offered, but would tremble even on hearing them merely named. In the subterraneous world, no person undertakes an employment, which he is not fully competent to perform. I recollect that I once heard the great philosopher *Rakbasi* speak on the subject in these words:—"Every person ought to know his own talents, and rightly judge of his own fitness and defects. If we do not, then stage-players show more understanding than we; for they choose, not the best parts, but such parts as they can best perform. Shall, then, stage-players surpass us in knowledge?"

The inhabitants of this principality are not divided, as with us, into two classes, nobles and commoners. In former times that was the case: but when the Prince observed that this distinction gave rise to a great deal of dissension, he wisely abrogated the custom of precedence which was claimed as a birth-right; so that at present every tree is honoured and esteemed solely for his virtues, services, and industry. On this head I will enlarge at a future opportunity. The only precedence which birth can now give, is many branches. A child is favoured and respected in proportion as it possesses many or few of these; for the greater the number of branches, the more is the tree fit for every kind of labour. I have before hinted something regarding the natural endowments and manner of the Subterraneans, to which I shall, in a future chapter, again draw the attention of the reader.

The system of religion in Potu consists in only a few chapters, and their whole profession of faith is not much greater than our Apostolic creed. It is here forbidden, under pain of being banished to the firmament, to expound the sacred writings; and if any person venture to dispute concerning the essence and attributes of the Divinity, and about the nature of ghosts, the soul, and such spiritual matters, he is sentenced to be immediately phlebot-

omized, and put into the public hospital, or madhouse of the town: "For it is perfectly absurd and preposterous," say they, "for us to attempt to describe and define that, wherein our understanding and comprehension are as blind as an owl in the sunshine." They are all united and agreed in the adoration and worship of one Supreme Being, whose omnipotence has created, and whose provinces keeps and preserves, all things. Respecting the form of worshipping this Being, every one is allowed to think and act as he will; but those who openly attack the established religion of the state, are punished as public disturbers of the peace. I, for that reason, enjoyed a perfect freedom of thought, and no one persecuted me on account of my religion.

The Potuites pray very seldom; but when they do, it is with such fervent devotion, that one might imagine them in rapture; so long are their prayers. I told them that with us it was customary to pray and sing divine songs and hymns, while managing our domestic concerns, and performing our daily labour; but this they reprobated. "An earthly Prince," said they, "would take it very much amiss, if a person who came to solicit a favour of him, were, in his presence, to commence brushing his clothes, and combing and dressing his hair." They seemed to have in no wise more relish for our divine songs: since they considered it ridiculous for any one to display his penitence, contrition, and afflictive remorse, in musical notes; as the wraths of the Deity is not to be appeased by a few trills and quavers, and by the sound of a few trumpets and flutes; but by sighs, and tears, and lamentations. These, and other similar observations, I could not hearken to without displeasure; and the greater was it, in consequence of my father, of blessed memory, who was once the parish-clerk and chorister, having, with his own hands, set several psalms to music, which were still sung in the church; and also because I had proposed to myself to solicit the first clerkship that became vacant. I endeavoured, however, to suppress my indignation; for these Subterraneans maintain their opinions with so much acuteness, and give to all they say such a power of plausibility, that it is difficult to confute even their grossest errors. They have still more extraordinary opinions on matters of religion; which they understand just as artfully and ingeniously how to defend. When I, for example, remarked to several of them, with whom I was on terms of friendship, that they could not expect to be happy in a future state, because

they wandered in the dark ways of ignorance; they replied, that he who with too much severity and harshness judged the conduct of others, ran great risk of being judged himself; for no person could condemn another, unless from pride and arrogance; which are vices that God, who is a lover of humanity, detests and abominates in his creatures: besides, to condemn the opinions of other people, and to obtrude our own, is to fancy, like madmen, that we have engrossed all the knowledge, and that nobody on earth has a claim to wisdom but ourselves.

I was once desirous of proving a position; and advanced such an opinion, and adduced such arguments, as I in my conscience felt convinced were well-grounded. My opponent commended both my arguments and proof, and advised me always to believe the evidence of my own conscience, which was a maxim that he himself would never swerve from; for if every body were to follow the dictates of his own conscience, all disputes, and motives for disputes, would soon cease.

Among other errors, into which the inhabitants of this principality had fallen, were the following:—Although they did not deny that God awarded the good and punished the wicked, they were nevertheless of opinion, that the justice of rewards and punishments was not exercised but in a future state. I cited several people who had been punished in this life for their wickedness and impiety. In proof against this objection, they cited just as many ungodly trees, who had been extremely fortunate until their death. “Whenever we have to contend with any opponent,” said they, “we supply ourselves with arms alone from the armory of ordinary life, being such as we are able to make use of; and we observe only those instances which serve to confirm our positions: taking care always to omit such as are injurious to, or militate against us. I cited myself then as a living evidence of facts, that several persons, who had done me much wrong, had died a miserable death. But that was entirely self-love, they answered; and was the cause of my looking upon myself as better, and of greater importance, in the eyes of the Deity, than other people, who had suffered the most unparalleled injuries, and yet saw their persecutors live to a good old age, and witnessed their being always fortunate.

On my once exhorting them to pray daily to God, they replied, that they did not deny the necessity of prayers; but still they conceived, that the true worship of the Almighty consisted in

obeying his ordinances. The simile which they advanced in illustration and proof of their opinions, was the following:—Suppose a Prince had two kinds of subjects; and that the one kind, either through weakness, human frailty, or from wickedness, transgressed his commands every day; yet these people were hourly coming, one or the other, to the Prince's palace, with solicitations and deprecations, and begging pardon for the faults and crimes they had committed, and which they were desirous of committing anew. The other kind came very seldom, or never, on their own accord, to the Court; but followed and executed faithfully and exactly the Prince's commands; and in so doing, paid him all the honour and obedience, which they as good subjects were indebted to him. Can any one now doubt, which the Prince would look upon as men, and deserving of his favour; and which, on the other hand, he would consider as bad, useless, and troublesome subjects, and condemn, as well on account of their innumerable vices and errors, as their continual importunities?

I frequently involved myself in these and similar controversies, but arguments were always fruitless; for I found it impossible to bring any one over to my way of thinking. I shall therefore skip over a great number, and confine myself to quoting merely the principal and most remarkable dogmas of their religion; leaving it to the reader's own judgment to approve of, or condemn, them as he may think fit.

The Potuites believe in only one true and omnipotent God, the maker and upholder of all things. They prove his omnipotence and unity, by the immensity, order, disposition, and harmony of the creation; and as they are profoundly skilled in natural philosophy and astronomy, they have such clear and exalted conceptions of the essence and attributes of the Divinity, that they consider it as absurd for any one to attempt to define, what so infinitely exceeds his power of comprehension. They have but five festivals in the whole year; the first of which is celebrated with great devotion, in pitch-dark places, into which no ray of light can possibly intrude; in order thereby to signify, that the Being which they worship is incomprehensible.. In these places they remain immovable and rapt in divine adoration, from sun-rise to sunset. This feast is called *The Day of the Incomprehensible God*, and happens on the first day of the Oak-month. On the other four festivals, which are celebrated in the four

seasons of the year, they return thanks to God for all the kind beneficence which he has shown them. It is very rare that any person stays away from these religious assemblies; and he who neglects to attend them, without very cogent reasons for his absence, is looked upon as a bad subject, and is held by every body in the utmost contempt. Their public prayers are so composed, that they have no relation to the suppliant, but merely to the prosperity of the Prince and of the state. No one prays publicly for himself. This regulation is intended to signify, that the welfare of every individual is so closely connected with the well-being of all, that it is not possible for the one to exist without the other. No person is obliged under any penalty to attend public worship; for it is considered that piety consists principally in charity; and experience teaches us, that virtue is more liable to be cooled by compulsory measures, than warmed; therefore they look upon it to be not only useless, but also hurtful, to coerce any person by main force to the worship of God. A man, said they, who desired mutual love from his wife, and undertook, by means of boxes on the ear and fillips on the nose, to chase away her coolness, would, instead of lighting up the last spark of affection still remaining in her bosom, entirely extinguish it; and her indifference would verge into hatred and dislike.

The Potuites, in former times, sought to appease the wrath of the Godhead with offerings, splendid processions, and other ceremonies. This external worship of the Deity endured till the renowned philosopher *Cimali*, about eight hundred years ago, stood forward as the reformer of the religion; and published a book called *Sebolac-taci*, or, *The True Remarks of a Religious Tree*. This book I read very sedulously to the end; and considered it a work of which I should never be weary. It contains theological dogmas and moral maxims, which the Potuites learn by heart. The subterraneous reformer abolishes the offerings and such like customs, upon the following grounds.—Those virtues, say he, are only real virtues, whereof the practice is troublesome and difficult to the corrupt heart. To make offerings, to sing psalms, to keep every other day sacred, in honour of the ashes of the dead, and to walk in procession with the effigies of saints, partake much more of the devout idleness than of spiritual business: if such may be called spiritual business, which every vicious-minded person can readily exercise, without its costing him the least self-denial. But he who endeavors with all his means

to relieve the indigent, to govern his temper, and subdue his revengefulness; who combats manfully against all concupiscence and lust, and strives with all his might to curb his daring passions,—exhibits alone the true sign of virtue and the fear of God. A splendid uniform, and glittering arms, are marks which distinguish the warrior from the man in trade: but the hero is always known by his bravery and valour; and by his patient suffering, unreluctant toils, and sacrifice of life and limbs, for his beloved fatherland.” With such like examples, *Cimali* has endeavoured to strengthen his precepts; and as the Potuites observe themselves strictly, the converters, or the so-called missionaries, of the Roman Church, who enjoin so much the observance of ceremonies, and promise paradise to all who worship relics and images, or during forty days glut and satiate themselves with the dainties and delicacies of the fields, vineyards, seas, oceans, and rivers, would lose both their time and labour among a people like this.

These are the theological tenets of the Potuites; which will, no doubt, strike some of my readers, as it struck me from the beginning, that this is the clear, pure, and unmystified religion of nature. These people, however, affirm and insist that this knowledge and doctrine were divinely revealed to them; and that they, some hundreds of years before, had received a book, wherein was written, and which still teaches them, all they should believe and do. In the earliest times, said they, their forefathers believed in, and were contented with, the plain and simple religion of nature: but as experience had taught them, that the clear light of nature was not sufficient to illumine the darkness of a world of people; since the moral feelings of some were not unfrequently paralyzed by slothfulness, indolence, and supineness; and the conceptions of others, by a keen and subtle philosophy, and through unbridled reveries and speculations, were too often blunted and perverted;—the Almighty had given them a written revelation; the necessity whereof appeared to them indubitable.

Although there appeared a great deal in the theology of the Potuites to which I could not conscientiously subscribe, yet I must candidly and frankly acknowledge, that there was much whereto I could not refuse my complete assent. What seemed to me, for example, not only to deserve approbation, but also to be worthy of admiration, was the custom which they, in the

time of war, observed on returning home victorious from a battle,—that instead of breaking out, as we do, in loud acclamations, and singing *Te Deum*, they passed several days in mournful silence; as if they re-reproached themselves, and were ashamed of a victory which had cost so many of their brethren and fellow-creatures their lives. For this reason, there is very little mentioned about battles, massacres, and bloodshed, in the subterraneous histories and annals; they are being chiefly filled with civil matters, ordinances, laws, and institutions.

(Klim now sets forth in detail the facts about the Constitution of Potu, the government of which is hereditary "in a right line." He reproduces various paragraphs of the laws of the country, and then goes on to describe Potu's schools and the system of education then prevailing.)

Having now for the space of two years performed the laborious service of courier, and perambulated the country with proclamations and letters patent, I became at length completely weary of this troublesome and unseemly occupation. I presented to the Prince one petition after another, praying to be discharged from my present situation, and appointed to a more honourable post. But my solicitations were always unsuccessful; as His Serene Highness was of opinion, that a more important employment would be beyond my abilities. He quoted both the law and the custom to me, which were adverse to my petitions, and according to which, those persons only who possessed the necessary qualifications were allowed to be promoted to eminent and difficult situations. "It was expedient," he said, "that I should continue in the service into which I had once entered, until such time as I might be able, by my own merit, to pave myself a way to a higher appointment." He concluded with the following admonitory counsel:—

"Let ev'ry one his talents justly weigh!
'And learn to know yourself!' is wisdom's precept;
And ere you take a load upon your shoulders,
First prove their strength, and try if they can bear it!"

These repeated refusals caused me at length to come to a temerarious and desperate resolution. I endeavoured with all my powers to invent something new, whereby I might be enabled to prove the superiority of my talents, and rub off the strain which

was stamped upon my capacity. I spent nearly a year in applying myself to the study of the laws and customs of the principality, in order, if possible, to discover either in the one or the other some point which might stand in need of amendment. The observations that I made in this respect I disclosed to a thorn-bush, who was my most intimate friend. He was of opinion, that my reflections and considerations were not entirely irrational; but at the same time, however, doubted much, whether they would prove of any advantage to the State. "It was the principal duty of a reformer," he said, "to view particularly and minutely the condition of the country into which he is desirous of introducing a reformation; for one and the same measure, according to the difference of the state of two countries, might produce quite other and entirely opposite effects, like a medicament that would cure one man, but, if taken by another, might prove fatal to him. He called my attention to the risk to which I exposed myself in hazarding this game,—representing to me that my life would certainly be forfeited, if my plan, on examination, did not succeed, and begging me, for that reason, to consider everything very deliberately and attentively before I took any steps. He nevertheless did not entirely dissuade me from my design, as there was a possibility, he added, of my discovering something or other, after mature reflection, which might prove both beneficial to myself and to the State.

I followed this advice of my friend, and deferred the presentation of my plan until a future period. In the meantime I continued to perform my office with patience, and traversed both towns and provinces in my usual way. This perpetual rambling from place to place afforded me an opportunity of acquiring an accurate knowledge of the whole principality and the adjacent countries; and that I might not forget the remarks I had made upon my journeys, I wrote them down in the best style whereof I was master, and presented them all together in this state to the Prince, in a volume of a decent and respectable thickness.

I learned very quickly that this work was completely after the taste of His Serene Highness. He perused the book throughout with great attention, and after having recommended it to the Council of State, with an abundance of commendations, he determined on making use of my services to circumambulate, and make discoveries upon, the whole planet *Nazar*. I expected, however, a very different reward for the sleepless night I had

passed, and sighed out in silence the words of the poet:—

"Merit, which ev'rywhere should be protected,
Is oft, alas! despis'd, and oft neglected."

But as I always had a particular desire to see and hear everything that was new and strange in the world, and as I fully relied upon receiving a handsome and extraordinary remuneration from this kind and beneficent Prince, on my return, I undertook the task with a kind of pleasure.

Although the entire planet *Nazar* is hardly twelve hundred miles in circumference, it nevertheless appears to the inhabitants, in consequence of their uncommonly slow gait, to be very large. On this account there are many countries, particularly the most remote ones, which are entirely unknown to them. No Potuite was able to perambulate the States of this planet in the space of two years; while I, on the contrary, with the help of my nimble feet, could perform the journey in little more than a month.

That which I in the beginning took the most to heart, was the fear of a difference in the language; but I was consoled with the assurance, that the inhabitants of the whole planet, how much soever they varied in manners and other respects, had but one language, and that the whole of the branch species was everywhere inoffensive, sociable, communicative, and hospitable, so that without the least danger I might travel whithersoever I pleased round about the entire globe. These accounts stimulated my propensity now still the more, and I set out on my travels in the beginning of Popular month.

Everything which now follows will be found so wonderful and marvellous, that a person might easily be induced to look upon them as mere phantasies and poetical inventions; particularly as the physical and moral differences which I noticed on my journey were so great, that, on figuring to ourselves the distinction which exists among the great variety of people on our globe, which are situated so remotely from each other, we are then able only to form a very faint idea regarding the same. But it must be taken into consideration, that most of the nations upon the planet *Nazar* are separated from each other by sounds, seas, and oceans; on account of which, the globe appears like a kind of Archipelago. The inhabitants cross these waters very rarely; and the ferrymen who dwell on their margins, are there solely for the accomodations of travellers. The natives very seldom set their feet out of their own abodes, and if they were obliged sometimes to cross

the water, they generally hastened immediately back again, as they could not bear to live in a foreign country. Thus it is, that as many nations as we find, so do we also find as many new fashions and tastes.

The principal cause of this great inequality must be sought for in the variety of nature, which is sufficiently evidenced by the many-coloured fields, the various soils, plants, fruits, and herbs, which we find in every country. Is it to be wondered at, that in this great variety of soil and fruit there should be found such inequality, and so opposite dispositions and manners among the inhabitants? In our world, the difference between the manners, way of thinking, colour, formation of the mind and body, of the remotely scattered nations, is not so considerable; for the soil being nearly the same in every part—except in so far that one country may be more fertile than another—and the water, fruits, and herbs, being of a very similar nature, such heterogeneous beings could not possibly be here produced, as in the subterraneous world, where every country is of an entirely peculiar nature. Foreigners are permitted to travel and trade in every part, but not to establish themselves, or fix their residence anywhere,—this being contrary to the constitutions of the different countries; therefore all the foreigners that are met with, are either travellers or merchants.

The provinces which immediately border on, and are adjacent to, Potu, are almost all of the same quality and condition in nature as this principality. The inhabitants of them, in ancient times, carried on some very bloody wars against the Potuities; but now, on the contrary, they are either in alliance with them, or they have submitted to their mild domination. But as soon as one has crossed the Great Sound which divides the whole planet, if I may so say, into two parts, completely new fashions, as well as entirely different species of animals, which are unknown to the Potuities, are immediately observable. The only properties, which all the inhabitants of the planet possess in common, are reason, their tree-like form, and the same language. On this account travelling is by no means difficult; and the less so, as the inhabitants, by reason of the great multitude of foreign travellers and merchants who pass through the provinces, are accustomed to see very different kinds of beings, which are even entirely dissimilar in themselves.

I think it necessary to remind my readers of all this beforehand, in order that they should not be offended at the following narrative, and look upon it as an ordinary, or extraordinary, tale told by the master of a ship.

It would be too long and too tedious to enumerate, in historical order, everything great and small that I met with on my travels; therefore, to avoid this useless prolixity, I will confine myself to describing those nations which appeared to me the most peculiar and uncommon, and in whose manners and natural dispositions I discovered so much of the extraordinary and wonderful, that the planet *Nazar* appeared to me deserving of a place among the wonders of the creation.

I everywhere observed, that the whole of the tree-folks differed very little in politeness, judgment, and gravity, from the Potuites; but in customs, manners, faculties of the mind, and conformation of the body, I found them so various, that every province appeared to be a new world.

In Quamso, the first province we arrived in after crossing the Sound, the inhabitants, who are all oaks, experience no bodily infirmities or sickness; but attain to the greatest age, in perfect and continual health. These people seemed to me, in the beginning, to be the happiest of all living creatures; but I quickly perceived, in the slight intercourse I had with them, that I was in considerable error. I saw correctly enough, that no one among them was dejected or troubled; but, on the other side, neither did I observe any one either jovial or glad. In the same manner that the most serene firmament and the softest air make no impression upon us, unless we previously experience snow, and rain, and sleet, and tempests, so have these trees no conception of their happiness, because it is never interrupted; and are incapable of perceiving that they are healthy, because they are never sick. They pass away their lives in continual health; but at the same time in constant indifference. Every good, which is enjoyed without interruption, wearies in the long run, and to enjoy fully the sweets and pleasures of life, it is necessary and essential that we sometimes taste its bitters. I can safely say, that among no people did I ever find so little civility, politeness, and good-nature, so algid, inanimate, and stiff conversation and intercourse, as among this. It is a nation without any vice; but which one can neither love nor hate, where no offences are committed, and where no benevolence or complaisance is to be met with; in short,

where nothing is found that can displease, and nothing that is completely agreeable. As, by reason of the continual health which they enjoy, they never have the opportunity of seeing any deceased persons, and they are never moved to pity or compassion at the sufferings of a fellow-creature, they pass away their whole lifetime in a perfectly insensible quiet and repose, - and without the least participation in the fate of their brethren; so that not the smallest trace of charity, pity, or beneficence, is to be found among them. We, on the contrary, who by means of sickness are reminded of our mortality, and are continually exhorted to hold ourselves in readiness for our last journey, learn, by our own sufferings and torments, to have pity and compassion upon others. I had, in that country, evident demonstration how far sickness and the danger of death contribute to reciprocal affection, gaiety, and cheerfulness, in the intercourse with our fellow-creatures; and how unjust we are in murmuring at our Creator, because we appear to be born to all these sufferings, which are of such essential service to us, and are attended with the happiest consequences.

These oaks are nevertheless subject to sickness, like all other trees, as soon as they arrive in any strange place. I believe for this reason,—that this advantage of health, if it may be called an advantage, ought solely to be attributed to the air and the provisions of the country.

The province *Lalak*, which is called by the surname *Maskatta*, or the *Happy*, appeared to accord with this appellation. Everything there came forth spontaneously, without the least help of art. It was neither necessary to plough nor to sow in that extremely fertile region; in short, I acquired, during my stay there, a thorough knowledge of this land of bliss,

Which milk and honey in abundance yields,
That flow in streams through groves and fertile fields,
In streams whose banks are deck'd with melons rare,
And beauteous strawberries without compare;
Where adamantine rocks, in lieu of vines,
Yield choice, nectareous, and delicious wines,
That pour in golden streams—O splendid sight!
Down into reservoirs of crystal bright;
Which in the verdant dales, in rosy bowers,
Exhaustless stand, bedeck'd with fragrant flowers,
Where all, protected from the noontide heat,

May cheer their spirits in a cool retreat.
No finer fruit than here is found, I trow,
Was ever seen on Eden's trees to grow;
Of taste delicious, and of beauteous hue,—
The like, perhaps, was never brought to view.
In great luxuriance vegetate these trees,
From which you pluck the fruit whene'er you please;
And ev'rywhere is sa'ry pottage seething,
The fumes whereof will nearly stop your breathing.
While pullets, ready pick'd, descend in lots,
And plunge into Jasper-seething-pots.
Now from the woods spring young and tender hares,
Nor dog, nor gun, nor yet the wiry snares,
Are ever wanted to secure your game—
so gentle, so domestic, and so tame,
Are all those timid animals, God wot,
As though they'd just come from the seething-pot;
For ready cook'd they come, betray no fears,
And spring upon your dish,—all volunteers:
And roasted woodcocks, pheasants, snipes, and larks,
And finer game than e'er was found in parks,
Come in abundance, just to suit your wishes,
All self-produced, on splendid porcelain dishes.
A sugar-snow, when this is ended, falls,
And soon assumes a form of little balls;
It rains then lemon-juice, and in a trice
The sugar-snow is crystaliz'd to ice.
Then puddings, tarts, and also fruits we candy,
Preserves of all sorts, likewise cherry-brandy,
Before you place themselves—each seems to greet ye,
And seems to say, in silence, come and eat me.
Then all the birds, that are not roasted, sing
Their charming songs, which make the thickets ring
With solos, duets, and with voices three,
Then in grand chorus, all extempore.
Of these good things, the trav'ller, when he will,
Partakes, enjoys, and eats and drinks his fill.

But these extraordinary advantages tend not, in the least degree, to make the inhabitants more happy than any body else. For, as they have no occasion to work for their support, they sleep away their lives in sloth and indolence, and are afflicted

with a multitude of disorders. They have worms and corruptions in their bodies, and most of them come to a premature death.

The state of this country gave me an opportunity of making divers philosophical reflections; among others, it entered my head to contemplate the condition of this nation, in which I discovered that the servants and day-labourers, in certain ways, are much more happy than those people who never have occasion to concern themselves about their daily bread, and for that reason give themselves up to inaction, sluggishness, and sensuality.—

They who are always sated, always must,—

In spite of ev'ry zest that art can give,—

Feel nothing short of loathing and disgust,

If in an ever-lasting feast they live.

The luxuries of life, if we enjoy

Too unrestrain'd, at length we're sure to find,

That they our ev'ry sense too soon will cloy,

Emaciate the body, taint the mind.

Hence originate the numerous vile plans, the desperate designs, and frequent suicides, which are here in vogue. For the prodigality in which they perpetually live, destroys, in every sense, all the finer enjoyments and transports of life, and begets in their stead, in every body, disgust and weariness of existence. Thus I found that this country, which I imagined to be a paradise, was the silent habitation of melancholy, much more deserving of pity than envy; and considered, therefore, that the sooner I quitted it the better.

Adjoining to this nation lies the kingdom of *Mardak*, the inhabitants of which are all cypresses, of uniform shape, if we except their eyes, which are very different. Some have oval eyes, others square, some have them very small, and others again so large that they cover the whole forehead. Some are born with two, others with three, and others with four eyes. There are even some that have only one eye, whom one might be inclined to look upon as the evident descendants of the renowned Polyphemus, if it were not placed in the nape of the neck. They are for this reason divided into certain stocks or lineages, according to the different number and form of their eyes, the names whereof are as follows:

1. *Nagiri*, or those who have oval eyes,—to whom, therefore.

all objects appear of an oval form.

2. *Naquiri*, whose eyes are square.

3. *Talampi*, who have very small eyes.
4. *Jaraku*, with two eyes; the one of which is always a little more askew than the other.
5. *Mehanki*, with three eyes.
6. *Tarasuki*, with four eyes.
7. *Harramba*, whose eyes occupy the whole forehead. And lastly,
8. *Skodolki*, who have only one eye, and that in the nape of the neck.

The most numerous and the most powerful race among these tribes, is that of the *Nagiri*, or those who have oval eyes, and to whom, consequently, all things appear under an oval form. The Regents, Senators, and Priests, are always elected of this tribe. These only manage the affairs of state, and admit no person of the other classes to fill any public employment, unless he acknowledge that a certain table, which is placed in the highest part of the Temple erected in honour of the Sun, appears to him also of an oval shape, and attest the same on oath.

This tablet is the most sacred in the Mardakite religion. Many upright and virtuous burghers, who have a great aversion to perjury, never, for that reason, obtain any honourable post, and are continually exposed to all possible ignominy, reproach, and persecution. It avails nothing, their excusing, and endeavoring to justify, themselves, by defending the belief they ought to have in their own eyes; on the contrary, they only thereby involve themselves in actions at law, and that which is a natural defect, is laid to their charge as mischief and contumacy. The oath to which those who are desirous of being preferred to any office must subscribe, is of the following tenor:

*"Kaki Manaska Quihompu Miriac Jakku Mesimbrii Caphani
Crukka Manaskar Quebriac Krusundora."*

TRANSLATION

"I swear, that the sacred tablet, placed in the Temple of the Sun, appears to me of an oval shape, and I promise to maintain this opinion until the last moment of my existence."

As soon as a person has taken this oath, he is received in the tribe of the *Nagiri*, and is eligible for any post of honour that he may choose to sue for.

The day after my arrival, as I was walking about the market-place, to divert myself a little, and pass away the time, I perceived an old man whom they were conducting to a place to be

scoured. A prodigious multitude of cypresses followed, and loaded him with reproachful epithets and sarcasms. I inquired of what crime he was guilty; and was answered, that he was a heretic, who had publicly declared that the Tablet of the Sun appeared to him to be square, and that, notwithstanding divers admonitions, he still remained obstinate, and pertinaciously defended this dangerous and mischievous opinion.

I repaired immediately to the Temple of the Sun, in order to ascertain whether my own eyes were orthodox or not; and as the sacred tablet really appeared to me to be square, I told my landlord, who had lately been appointed churchwarden in the town, candidly, what I thought. He heaved a deep sigh on this occasion, and acknowledged, in like manner, that it appeared to him also square; but that he durst not express his opinion to that effect before any person whomsoever, for fear of quarrelling with the ruling tribe, and losing his appointment.

In silence, but not without a palpitation of the heart, and a violent trembling in every limb, I quitted this place, for fear my back should be compelled to atone for the error of my eyes, and that, under the odious epithet of heretic, I should be made a laughing-stock of, and disgracefully and ignominiously driven from the town. No regulation or order in the world, as it appeared to me, could be more cruel, barbarous, and unreasonable than this, whereby dissimulation and perjury, of which I was an eye-witness, alone paved the way to posts of honour. I therefore, on my return home to Potu, did not forget, on every occasion, to pour forth my spleen against this barbarous State. against this regulation, and giving vent to the whole of my spite, in a dialogue with a juniper-tree, who was my most intimate friend, I received the following hint: "We Potuites see clearly enough, that the regulations of the Nagiri are absurd and unreasonable; but you, my dear Klim, ought not, as it seemeth to me, to be so much astonished that the inequality of vision should be treated there with so much rigour; for, if I remember right, you yourself related, that there are, in most of the European States, certain ruling stocks or tribes, who, because of a peculiar and natural defect in their visual organs understanding, persecute the others with fire and sword; and yet you extolled these violent measures, as very pious regulations, and highly beneficial to the State." I quickly remarked the drift of this rub, and immediately blushed deeply! From that time, I

always judged those who were apt to err, with much less severity, and was continually clamorous for toleration.

The principality of *Kimai* is considered, in consequence of its immense riches, the most powerful of any State upon this planet; for, besides the large silver-mines, which are very numerous, there is collected yearly, from the rivers, a great quantity of gold dust, and the sea, near the coasts, almost everywhere abounds in pearls. But on a closer and more accurate examination of the condition of this country, I discovered that happiness was far from consisting in riches; for the greatest part of the inhabitants were either miners, bold-refiners, or pearl-fishers, who, condemned to that unworthy and disgraceful thraldom, rummaged both the earth and the sea for the sake of sordid lucre. Those who are not engaged in this employment, keep watch over the treasure that is collected. The whole country is so full of robbers, that it is unsafe, and almost impossible, to travel without well-armed guides.

There is no day kept here so sacred, but
 The sun, when he his eye doth from it turn away,
 Doth also turn his face from some base action.
 Violence, fraud, and theft, are here in vogue:
 By rapine only doth this nation live,
 And for his kinsman, here no one is safe;
 Nor can a guest, in soft tranquility,
 Repose secure beneath his landlord's roof.
 Brothers lurk in ambush for each other's life;
 And eagerly the son doth count each step
 His aged father taketh towards the grave.
 No trace of virtue in this land is found;
 And Astrea, of all the fair celestials,
 Was herself the last to quit, full horror-stricken,
 This blood-soak'd, vice-replenish'd earth.

In consequence, this people, who are looked upon by all their neighbours with a jealous eye, are much more deserving of compassion than of being envied. Because fear, suspicion, envy, and jealousy, rage in every bosom, the one looks continually upon the other as his enemy who watches his opulence; so that terror, anguish of mind, sleepless nights, and pallid countenances, are the only fruits of that felicity for which the principality of *Kimai* is distinguished. I travelled, therefore, with much anxiety and difficulty, through this country; for at every turnpike-gate, and

every stage, at which I arrived, I was obliged to furnish the guard, which was there in attendance, with my name, the place of my birth, the reason of my journey, and such like; so that I, in short, was exposed to all the unpleasantness and vexations to which a traveller is subject in a suspicious country. In this principality there is one volcano, which perpetually throws forth the subterranean burning lava in prodigious streams.

As soon as I had quitted this country, the perambulation whereof I found the most difficult and troublesome upon the whole journey, I continued my course always toward the East. I met every where with sociable, communicative, and polite, but at the same time very extraordinary, people; but at none did I marvel so much as at the inhabitants of the very small State of Quamboja, which was, if I may so say, inverted completely in its nature. The older, for example, a person was, the more was he dissolute, debauched, and licentious; so that rashness, incontinence, and the vices which otherwise we are accustomed to find only in youth, there increased with age. For that reason, no one, in that State, is intrusted with an office, unless he be under forty years; for as soon as he has attained to that age, he is looked upon as a wild, impudent sauce-box,

Who, for his conduct, oft is made to skip
From lashes given with his mama's whip.

I saw old men, whose heads were grey with age, in the streets, playing at hop-scot, and in the squares and markets amusing themselves with the game of prisoner's-base.

Here one is seen to build, all in his glory,
A house of cards, high three or four story;
Another watching him, then, in a trice,
Blows down the house that he has built so nice.
Some here are seen at play with children's balls,
And others cheap'ning ginger-bread at stalls;
Sometimes they play a game, where eggs they roll;
And sometimes money pitch into a hole.
At ev'ry boyish game they're seen, and eke
They're oft engag'd in playing hide and seek:
And matrons too, with dolls, are oft seen tripping
Across the fields; next sportively are skipping.
And hoary-headed husbands pleased you see,
To shoot with pop-guns made of elder-tree.
Their sports they all enjoy in this strange spot,—
Some ride on sticks full gallop, some full trot.

The boys, as they passed, would oft reproach these old people, and would not unfrequently lash them home to their children. I remember once to have seen a decrepit old man, who was spinning a top in the market-place, and that it was related to me, that he, in his youth, was a particularly grave and soberminded personage, and filled the highest situation in the supreme Council.

This inverted order of nature is observable in both sexes. A young person, who married a very old woman, was, for that reason, everywhere told he would wear horns, ornaments which, on the contrary, with us, an old man only, who takes a young girl in marriage, is afraid of having placed on his forehead. I found once even two very emaciated old men in the market-place fighting a duel; and when I expressed my great surprise and astonishment at this extraordinary vivacity and ardour, which were manifest in these men, so advanced in age, and inquired the cause of the duel, I was answered, that a dispute had arisen between them respecting a woman of a very loose and libidinous character, to whom they both laid claim. It was also added, that they certainly would get a sound flogging from their superiors, in case the dissolute pranks and tricks of these old fellows should come to their knowledge. The same afternoon it was related, that an old lady of distinction had hanged herself in a state of despondency, for the sake of a young beech-tree, from whom she had received a denial.

This inverted order of nature requires naturally inverted laws. No one is, therefore, by that section of the law which treats on guardianship, allowed to have charge of his own effects or estates, unless he be under forty years of age; and no contract between persons above that age is considered valid, unless it be signed and ratified by their guardians or children. In the chapter on subordination the words are: "*Old men and old women shall be dutiful and obedient to their children.*" Placemen always receive their discharge from office a little before they attain the age of forty, as they are then declared minors by the Council, and are delivered over to the superintendence and management of their young kinsfolk. I considered it, therefore, not advisable to remain too long in that country, where I, in the course of ten years, according to their laws, should be condemned to become a child again. When I had finished my journey, I compared this people's condition with the way of life and the regulations which we have here above, where numbers, in their manhood, think

and write like philosophers, but who, in their old age, hunt eagerly after riches, empty titles, and other illusive fooleries. This comparison reconciled me, in some degree, again with the *Quambojaians*, and taught me not to have so contemptible an opinion of them, as I in the beginning had entertained.

(To be concluded)

OBLIVION

by JOSE-MARIA DE HEREDIA
translated by CLARK ASHTON SMITH

The temple's ruin crowns the promontory.
Close-shrouded with the root-enwoven sod,
The marble goddess, the bronze demigod,
Mingle their broken and their tarnished glory.

Sometimes a lonely herdsman, going past
With horn that sobs some plangent old refrain
Filling the air and the calm seas again,
Arises darkly on the clear blue vast.

Mother of gods, the mellowing earth will teem,
And all the vain sweet eloquence of spring
A fresh acanthus for the column bring;

But man, oblivious of his father's dream,
Untrembling hears the Nereusean moan
Of ocean grieving for the sirens flown.

THE DOOR

by DAVID H. KELLER

One day Carmen was very late for lunch. It was an unwritten law that none should be on the desert during the summer's mid-day heat. At first Arnold was merely annoyed; as the time grew longer and the heat increased he was worried. Expert horse-woman though she was, there were dangers in the blazing, blistering, mirage-filled desert. Just as he was about to call for the saddling of his horse, intending to search for her, he saw her approaching at a canter. That was bad. She ought not to hurry in this heat.

Instead of going to the corral she rode directly to the ranch house. As he walked out to greet her, he noted that she was flushed and not by the sun alone. There was in her face the expression, accompanied by the peculiar blush, which he had learned to call "that dangerous look." If they were walking or riding together when that combination of look and flush occurred, he managed very well; but if she were in the saddle and he afoot, or standing and he sitting, then he felt an overwhelming sense of inferiority. Now, as she looked down at him, he knew that he was wholly unable to cope with whatever her devious mind had found disturbing.

"Today I saw something new and interesting, Arnold," she said in a monotonous voice.

"How wonderful—that after all these months you should have discovered something interesting!" he cried. "What was it?"

"I saw a door."

"Is that new? I thought they were familiar, everyday objects in the house and bunkhouse." Arnold was thinking fast.

"But this is different. I never saw or even imagined a door like this. Why didn't you tell me about it? Show it to me?"

"Maybe I wanted you to have the thrill of finding it."

"No," Carmen replied, dismounting and seating herself wearily on the lower step of the porch. "No," she continued, "you knew about that door but for some reason didn't want to tell me. I think you were afraid."

"Why should I be afraid to talk to my wife about anything?"

"I don't know; but I believe you were and still are. Did you make the door?"

"No. It was there when I bought the ranch."
"Then who did make it?"
"How do I know?"

Arnold called to one of the hands to take Carmen's horse to the corral.

"That door must be very old," Carmen resumed. "Perhaps time and the wind rotted the house it was a part of and the shifting sand covered the foundation—everything but the door is gone—nothing else remains."

"I don't think there ever was a house. When I first came here I dug very deeply all around it trying to find some trace of a foundation but there was nothing to show there ever had been a building. There never was anything but a door."

"But why should there be just a door?" she insisted. "There seems to be no reason for its existence. It serves no purpose. I examined it very closely. I rode all around it. It's surrounded by the desert. In front, and a bit to one side, is a cactus rearing its seven candlesticks sixty feet toward the sky. Behind the door stands a huge, twisted and wind-tormented Joshua tree. Mesquite and sage are all around. What does it mean, Arnold?"

"First tell me about the door and then I'll ask you a question."

"I suppose you want to test my faculty for detailed observation. Very well. Standing upright, its base evidently deeply buried, is a piece of timber, about eight inches square and at least six feet high. It may be mahogany, ebony or ironwood. In any event, it's black and highly polished by the wind and sands of years. This timber serves as the doorpost on which the door is hung with three hinges. These are either silver or copper; the metal is tarnished and greened by time. The door is almost as tall as the post, about four feet wide and the planks are so cleverly joined that it has the appearance of being made of a single slab of wood. And there is a doorknob."

"It must be a real door if it has hinges and a knob," Arnold said.

"But there is no frame; neither settle, inside jamb nor lintel. Nothing but the desert around it, a cactus in front and a Joshua tree behind. It shuts out nothing and can open into nothing. Whenever I find anything like that—purposeless and mysterious, I mean—in the desert or in my life, I am both intrigued and frightened."

"I understand how you feel. Is the fact that it is frameless and seemingly purposeless the only remarkable point about the door?"

"No. There's a woman on the door. A metal woman, about five feet tall, set on the door like a medallion. She's very beautiful, perfect in every detail and very feminine in her appeal. When I first saw her I thought perhaps she was the reason you hadn't shown me the door. I said perfect, but not wholly so, for she has no face; simply the contour of a head, her hair wind-blown and streaming—no eyes nor ears—not even a mouth. But there's no doubt about her being a woman. I told you that her nude body is beautiful. Her head and the hinges haunt me. You never saw such hinges—but you said you had."

"Yes," Arnold admitted slowly, "I have seen them—but you tell me."

"The hinges are hands and arms, but only half of the upper arms. The elbows form the bend of the hinges; the upper arms fastened to the post and the hands extended onto the door. The lower hinge is feminine, with slender arm and wrist, the fingers long, smooth, lovely. They are clasped around the ankle of the medallion woman, holding her fast."

"Peculiar concept of a woman being immobilized by another woman."

Ignoring his comment, Carmen continued: "The middle hinge is distinctly masculine; a powerfully muscled arm and a large, broad hand with strong, stubby fingers, wide spread as they press deeply, crushing into the woman's abdomen."

Carmen paused as if expecting some comment or question but, as her husband remained silent, she continued her description, but now her voice was low and her eyes filled with fear.

"The third arm is fleshless; just the bones. I am positive that it's made of silver. The skeleton hand is gripped tightly around the woman's throat, strangling her." Carmen shivered.

"Perhaps the artist made her featureless so that, tortured, dying horribly, she might retain her dignity and pride by not showing the world the agony that would have been depicted in a distorted face. A beautiful woman would not like to be made ugly, even by death." Arnold spoke quietly, sympathetically.

"Millions of women are like that. They die, body and soul, and no one has the slightest idea of their suffering, not even their husbands; and they are too proud to ask for understanding or pity."

"Nicely said, Carmen. You make the female seem heroic. Even Prometheus was not too proud to show the world how he suffered. Now, had he been a woman—"

She rose quickly and stood tense. Turning toward her husband she asked in a cold, hard tone: "Did you really see the door?"

"Yes. Did you open it?"

"There was no need."

"Then, if you left it closed, how did you *know* there was nothing on the other side? Had you opened it, walked through it, then you would have been absolutely sure of what the closed door concealed."

"Have you opened the door?"

"No. I wasn't afraid to, yet I was curious; but I realized that it would be wise to leave it closed."

"Then you think there's something important behind that door?"

"Quite possibly. One might find anything. You might find a Virginia garden. Who knows?"

"Oh! You brute," she cried furiously. "That was the most cowardly thing you could have said." She ran, crying, to her room and did not reappear until dinner time. All during the meal she was remote and morose. After a few minutes on the porch she pled a headache and retired.

Habitually, each morning after breakfast, Carmen went to the corral where Dinwiddie, her palomino gelding, stood saddled and waiting for her. After a few minutes of nuzzling his mistress' hand with his soft pink nose he would receive bits of sugar and much neck-patting as his reward. Then Carmen would mount and ride into the desert.

The morning after the talk with Arnold about the door, Carmen felt a great desire to ride as fast as she could, to the mystical creation standing isolated in a sea of sand, as inexplicable as the Sphinx. Day after day she left the ranch heading in a different direction but always circled to the door, where she sat for hours, pondering its meaning. Always she left it with increasing morbidity and a deepening sense of futility.

She had tried, honestly and sincerely, to learn to love this waste-land desert, barren and forbidding, but could not. Her soul continued to cry out for the soft green land, the rolling hills and cool, fragrant gardens of her native Virginia. Tall

spikes of yucca could not compare with her beloved delphiniums nor the sun-burned Joshua trees with the soft pungent cedars of home.

Night after night she had been sleepless, recreating in her memory the narrow boxwood-bordered walks, in her home garden, drinking deeply the scent of roses, lilacs and jasmine, hearing again theplash of the fountain and seeing the lilies and goldfish in its rippling pool, tasting the delicate ripe fig. Finally she would begin to sob, face buried in the pillow, so Arnold would not hear her and realize her heartache. Overwhelmed with the futility of life she would beat against the mattress with clenched hands.

Following one night of nostalgic suffering she asked Arnold: "Do you think real flowers would grow in this desert?"

"Anything will grow here if the soil is irrigated. Why?"

"I was thinking it would be lovely to have a real flower garden."

"Why not set out a cactus garden? They are mighty pretty when in bloom," he suggested.

"No. It would be best to leave them in the desert. They would feel like prisoners if we confined them in a garden."

He looked at her, trying to understand.

"Do you feel like a prisoner?"

"Sometimes," she replied.

Without a word he drank his coffee and left the table.

Carmen wrote her mother for seeds and bulbs and waited anxiously for their arrival. She loved her husband sincerely and felt that if she had a garden she would be perfectly happy and forget the heat and the wide vistas of nothing but sand. Her love held her to this land of desolation but the bonds were cutting so deeply that they hurt.

Finally the seed came. Carmen was delighted. Arnold was mildly enthusiastic.

"You plan the garden, Dear, and the hands will fix it for you, just the way you want it. They will lay a pipe and make a fountain; only an iron pipe at first, till I can buy you something fancy."

During the cool of every morning Carmen worked singing; she planted the seeds and bulbs, watching anxiously for their sprouting. She visualized the stand-pipe spouting into the cement pool as really a marble Cupid standing under a shower of

sparkling water. In the pool she saw the lilies and goldfish Arnold had ordered. Finally a bud showed on one of the iris.

Then one evening it did not cool off as usual after sundown. The night was as suffocating as the day. Carmen heard her husband rise before dawn and ride away with the hands. All morning the bronze-red sun poured a concentrated fire down on the desert but about mid-morning it suddenly blacked out. The wind rose, howling like ten thousand banshees, driving the sand before it with ever increasing velocity. For three days the furious wind whipped the sand until it became like talcum, penetrating every part of the house and piled in huge dunes and banks around the building. Carmen by turns had cowered, crying and praying or angrily paced the storm-darkened rooms.

The wind died as suddenly as it had risen. Carmen dashed out into what had been her garden, now only heaps of powdery sand. Frantically she dug into the mounds of dust trying to find some trace of her beloved flowers, but only the iron pipe stood out above the waste, mockingly throwing a stream of water into the brilliant sunshine.

After an hour of futile effort to find even one plant she dashed into the house and threw herself on her bed, sobbing uncontrollably, as though she had just seen the dead face of her first born.

Just before noon Arnold and the ranch-hands returned, haggard, exhausted and grim-eyed.

"Arnold! Arnold!" his wife cried. "Your terrible desert has buried my garden. It has killed everything. I have nothing to live for now."

"I'm very sorry, Dear," he said perfunctorily, his mind absorbed with the thought of the sheep and cattle smothered to death by the wind or buried alive in the hills of sand; the water holes which would have to be relocated and dug out. Subconsciously he resented her lack of interest or concern for his comfort after three days of battle with the elements.

Carmen stood looking at her husband. Could it be possible that this unsympathetic man was the one for whom she had sacrificed two years of her life? Was there nothing more he could say when he learned of the destruction of her garden than "I'm very sorry"?

Now, in her mind, he had become one with the desert, heartless, receiving all and giving nothing in return. He was just another man, selfish and incapable of understanding the lone-

liness and heartaches of a woman. For a moment she hated him as she hated the desert.

The next morning, for the first time in weeks, Carmen went riding. During the following days Arnold was preoccupied with repairing the damage of the storm and saw his wife only at supper time. He noticed that she was very unhappy, and decided, when the ranch was running smoothly, to take her on a vacation. Perhaps a visit to Virginia would help. In the meantime Carmen was riding, riding, always riding.

Then she discovered the door.

While they never resumed their discussion of it, Arnold was disturbed by its evident fascination for his wife. Her increased moodiness told him that she went there nearly every day. He considered asking her to ride with him so they could look at it together; perhaps that would break the spell it seemed to have cast over her. When he had released her from its power he would donate it to a museum. But for some reason he could not broach the subject.

Lambing time made him forget everything except the welfare of the ewes and lambs. Finally the time came when the hands could take care of everything and, sighing with relief, he rode home about mid-afternoon. Instead of going directly to the corral he rein-tethered his horse by the porch.

Carmen was not in her room. The Mexican cook said that she had not returned from her ride. Arnold waited on the porch, his impatience increasing with the passing hours. Finally he started scanning the horizon with his field-glasses. At last he sighted Dinwiddie, riderless, trotting homeward. At once Arnold sprang into his own saddle and rode swiftly into the desert, passing the palomino with only a glance.

Disregarding the welfare of either himself or his horse he galloped straight to the door. Anything might have happened. Dinwiddie attacked by a rabid coyote or plunging and rearing at sight or sound of a rattler could easily have thrown Carmen and left her seriously injured on the hot desert. Arriving at his destination he first rode around the door and finding no trace of his wife, dismounted in front of the mysterious panel. Pausing anxiously before it for a moment he grasped the metal knob and pulled the door open.

For some seconds he stood, incredulous, unbelieving, yet knowing that what he saw could mean but one thing. A cool

breeze, as from a garden, caressed his face; the mingled fragrance of many flowers, and the twitter of many birds.

Just a few yards beyond the opened door, Carmen, relaxed and fully at ease, sat on the trunk of a fallen Joshua tree. All lines of discontent were erased from her delicate face as she smiled happily down as her empty arms, held as if she cradled a bouquet. She was surrounded by an aura of perfect peace and contentment; a soft breeze tousled her lovely golden hair.

With a sigh Arnold stepped back and closed the door.

TWO HORSEMEN

by VINCENT STARRETT

Life came riding up the vale
On a yellow steed,
Helmet off; his coat of mail
Shining like a polished pail—
Thus it was decreed.

“Here’s a penny for you, lad:
We are brothers. Are you glad?”
This was life, indeed!

Death came riding up the lane
On a sable steed,
Visor down; his coat of chain
Black as was his horse’s mane—
Thus it was decreed.

“Here’s your penny, Sir Disguise:
You can not conceal your eyes!”
This was Death, indeed—
This was life, indeed!

TWO POEMS AFTER BAUDELAIRE

by CLARK ASHTON SMITH

THE GIANTESS

In times when Nature, filled with fervor limitless,
Conceived and brought to birth many a monstrous child,
I fain had dwelt anigh to some young giantess,
Even as lies a cat, voluptuous and mild,

At a queen's feet. Full happily I would have seen
Her soul and body burgeoning in dreadful games;
Divining if her heart behind the matutine
Mists of her eyes concealed a sun of somber flames.

I would have roamed her might rondures at mine ease;
Crawled on the thighward slope of her enormous knees;
Or when, at whiles, by summer-swollen suns oppressed,
She laid along the field her hugeness down,
I would have roamed her mighty rondures at mine ease;
As at a mountain's foot a still and peaceful town.

LETHE

Cruel and deaf, come to my heart again,
O indolent sphinx, tigress that I adore!
Long, long my trembling fingers would explore
The dense and heavy darkness of thy mane;

And in the skirts replete with thy perfume
I would enshroud this ever-aching head,
The musty sweetness of my passion dead
About me like old flowers sere with doom.

For I would sleep, rather than live, alas!
Doubtful as death that all-desired slumber
Where unremorseful kisses without number
Will cover thy beautiful body like polished brass.

Unequalled is thy couch, that deep abyss,
To engulf the sighs and sobbings of my drouth;
Potent oblivion dwells upon thy mouth
And Lethe flows full-fountained in thy kiss.

To this my doom, a prisoner innocent,
The docile, destined martyr of desire,
I yield, and all my ardor fans the fire
And wrath of my undying punishment.

To drown my rancor, I will drink anew
Hemlock benign and balms of sleep and rest
From the sharp, delightful nipples of thy breast
That holds no heart in its enchanted mew.

BOOKS OF THE QUARTER

THE DERLETH SCIENCE-FICTION COLLECTION

THE OTHER SIDE OF THE MOON, edited by August Derleth. Pellegrini and Cudahy, New York. 461 pp., \$3.75.

The twenty stories in *The Other Side of the Moon* cover a wide range. In time they run between H. G. Wells' *The Star* and the recently published stories of Van Vogt and Frank Belknap Long, and in mood, from J. S. Beresford's *The Appearance of Man*, an analysis of human triviality against a cosmic background, to Lord Dunsany's whimsical tall tale, *The Strange Drug of Dr. Caber*. There are also plenty of good adventure stories. The sources for this collection are equally wide, for Mr. Derleth has not confined himself to the specialist science-fiction magazines, but has gathered much fresh material from books and the current slick-paper magazines. It's a very good selection.

The stories that impressed me most were Bradbury's *The Earth Men*, a sardonic bit of humor showing the fate of the pioneer; Van Vogt's *Resurrection (The Monster)*, which shows how interesting a thriller Van Vogt can write when he abandons semantics; Gerald Kersh's *The Monster*, a pathetic story of a Japanese wrestler blown by the atomic bomb to 18th century England; *Original Sin* by S. Fowler Wright, where a woman once again spoils Eden after the euthanasia of most of the human race; Ted Sturgeon's ironic *Memorial*; and H. P. Lovecraft's *Beyond the Wall of Sleep*, which needs no comments. The other stories are all enjoyable.

This anthology shows very clearly that science-fiction can rise above the ray-gun and world-conquest level to which it is so often limited. It can not only serve as a vehicle for thought, as in Beresford's vision, but also may have within itself value beyond entertainment value. In this aspect, science-fiction may be a field of withdrawal in Toynbee's sense, in which new values may be worked out—solutions to the problems of man versus science. Science-fiction has offered several answers to this problem, among them the semi-religious blame-it-on-the-déro approach, and the science-ueber-alles approach, which Robert Bloch has so fittingly described as the "white-man's burden" philosophy, and the more realistic approach of Bradbury and

Kuttner, among others, who, following the tradition of Huxley, Stapledon, W. H. Hudson, William Morris, call for a new evaluation of science and life, in which irrational elements such as art and emotion are frankly recognized and valued. The last two philosophies are represented in this anthology.

But what I like most about *The Other Side of the Moon* and Derleth's previous *Strange Ports of Call* is that the stories can be read by anyone. An intense interest in science-fiction and its history is not necessary before an outsider can understand and enjoy the stories.

Science-fiction more than any other branch of modern fiction, probably, stands in danger of becoming an esoteric literature which only those who have built up the proper symbolism through long reading and personal associations can understand. Part of this danger arises from science-fiction itself, from its background of imaginative science which has so often expanded to destroy the story and writing qualities, while another part lies in the succession of scientific fads, the last of which is semantics, which have accompanied science-fiction from an early date. Neither of these trends can much interest the uninitiated general reader. Stories based upon them may be timely and topical, but usually lack universitility. Finally, when the momentary need which they fill has ceased to exist, they themselves cease to exist, and are forgotten. We should remember the fate of the now unreadable 19th century utopias.

Derleth's anthologies, on the other hand, by stressing a middle ground within science-fiction, with readability paramount, are very valuable in focusing attention once more upon a broader stream of development which is not dated and still has much to offer.

—EVERETT F. BLEILER

ODE TO A SKYLARK

SKYLARK OF VALERON, by Edward E. Smith, Ph. D. Fantasy Press, Reading, Pennsylvania, 252 pp., \$3.00.

Richard Seaton, seated in "the mightiest space ship that had ever lifted her stupendous mass from any planet known to the humanity of this, the First Galaxy, was hurtling onward through the hard vacuum and intergalactic space."

Seaton, as we thus discover him on p. 40, seems to be a bit bored with life aboard the *Skylark*, despite the presence of his wife and two friendly associates. He casts about for something to do and presently we find that "he began to delve deeper and deeper into the almost-unknown, scarcely plumbed recesses of his new mind—a mind stored with the accumulated knowledge of thousands of generations of the Rovol and the Drasnik; generations of specialists in research in two widely separated fields of knowledge."

Using a "fifth-order projector" he spends hours "staring unseeingly into infinity" and as his friend Crane remarks, "I have no idea what he is working out but it is a problem of such complexity that in one process he used more than seven hundred factors. . . ."

Suddenly the great intellect arises and speaks.

"Folks, I think I've got something!" he cried. "Kinda late, but it'll take only a couple of minutes to test it out."

Our genius has evolved nothing less than an apparatus for receiving sixth-order waves of pure thought. After engaging in a mental duel with the "Intellectuals"—almost inconceivably intelligent forces—Seaton and his companions go into the Fourth Dimension.

Naturally his wife is a bit upset by this activity, but the great scientist reassures her, thusly. "Steady on, girl—it's all right—everything's jake. Hold everything, dear. Pipe down, I tell you! This is nothing to get your goat. Snap out of it Red-Top!"

Thus comforted by the intellect which is capable of working out problems containing processes of more than seven hundred factors, Seaton's wife accompanies him through the land of the hypermen, and duly escapes them, whilst Seaton encourages her from time to time thusly: "Yowp! I was never so glad to see a light before in all my life, even if it is blue. . . ."

Rejoining his friends after Fourth Dimensional adventures,

their next problem is to get back to their own galaxy. Seaton consults his friend Martin, and modestly admits his own ignorance to his wife.

"Silly, says you?" Seaton, still blushing, interrupted her. "Woman, you don't know the half of it! I'm just plain dumb, and Mart was tactfully calling my attention to the fact. Them's soft words that the slatlike string bean just spoke, but believe me, Red-Top, he packs a wicked wallop in that silken glove!"

Seaton under-rates himself, of course, for a little later we find him capable of such observations as "This looks like home, sweet home to me. Nitrogen, oxygen, some CO₂, a little water vapor, and traces of the old familiar rare gases. And see them oceans, them clouds, and them there hills? Hot dog!"

Seaton and his comrades have arrived on the beleaguered planet Valeron, which they rescue from cosmic doom with the aid of his comrade Martin's "old bean" or "think-tank" and Seaton's own ingenuity, plus a capacity for intellectual enthusiasm which manifests itself frequently in unrestrained exclamations of "nuts!" and "get a load of this!"

Obviously a man of Seaton's genius needs a wider scope for his talents. In the course of his adventures he reconstructs celestial bodies and readjusts their orbits . . . conquers Earth . . . builds a new, vast space-ship . . . maps the universe . . . builds mechanical brains . . . traps, outwits and finally disposes of the "Intellectuals" . . . and eventually polishes off the arch-villain, Dr. "Blackie" DuQuesne.

The brilliant scientist confronts his evil adversary at the close of the book and denounces him in measured terms, thusly:

"You don't know it yet, half-shot, but you are going to do exactly nothing at all!" Seaton snapped. "You see, I've got a lot of stuff here that you don't know anything about because you haven't had a chance to steal it yet, and I've got you stopped cold. I'm just two jumps ahead of you, all the time. I could hypnotize you right now and make you do anything I say, but I'm not going to—I want you to be wide awake and aware of everything that goes on. Snap on your zone if you want to—I'll see to it that the Earth stays in its orbit. Well, start something, you big, black ape!"

Materializing, dematerializing, expending physical and mental force in near-disasters and hairbreadth escapes, Seaton never loses

the human touch, and at the close of the book it is revealed that he is about to become a father.

Thus ends the famous *Skylark* trilogy, beloved of science-fiction fans. Although the publishers claim that this third and final story is "complete in itself", it is really necessary to be familiar with the antecedent events of the first two books in order to fully comprehend the vast scope of the narrative. The few excerpts quoted here scarcely do justice to the saga.

Carping pedants may complain that some of hero Seaton's exploits tax credulity. It is necessary only to quote again from the words of Seaton himself: the learned scientist has his own brilliant explanation of the whole phenomenon:

"Yeah, 'lucky' is my middle name—I could fall into a cesspool and climb out covered with talcum powder and smelling like a bouquet of violets."

We believe he could, at that.

—RORERT BLOCH

MORE CALDECOTT

FIRE BURN BLUE, by Sir Andrew Caldecott. Longmans, Green. 222 pp., \$2.75.

Southeastern Europe, I am given to understand, is a good hunting-ground for vampires. That's as may be. I have never been really intimate with a vampire, myself. To tell the truth, I have never been greatly attracted by vampires. I never even liked Theda Bara, in my salad days.

But, however that may be, I shall always insist that England—especially Victorian England, Trollope's England—is the place for ghosts. England, because one has a sense of the past in England, as nowhere else. Doubtless there is as much past in other countries, more in some of them; but we—we, I mean, of the Anglo-Saxon heritage—know so much less about it elsewhere that it fails to live for us. (And what is a ghost if not the dead past that refuses to die?) And Victorian England because Victorian England was comfortable, settled, really solidly established, as no country in the world is established today. I don't care anything about weird creatures with eyes in their elbows, sloshing about in a world with an unpronounceable name; I can't make a sufficient connection with such thing to be terrified by them. But when the Unknown and the Unknowable thrusts itself transiently and inexplicably into a world I do know *and feel at home*

in—and where I have everything nicely ticketed and docketed—then I confess my blood runs delightfully cold. And the smugger and snugger that world and its denizens, the colder that wind blows.

It is for this reason, no doubt, that I like Sir Andrew Caldecott's stories. Not the rather foreign ghosts which Englishmen encounter in the jungles when they are upon colonial missions; I'm "allergic" to the tropics unless I have Conrad for my guide. But the newly-dead who took her place in the choir the night a new and important work was to be sung because she and she alone had had the imagination to realize that the note the composer had meant to write was not the note that got itself printed in the score—and the organist who saw in the mirror the suicide that was not to take place for seven years yet—and the boy whose initials spelled "rat" and who made a "familiar" of his pet and nearly died with the creature—and the "touchings" along a certain gravel path in a little English village as the result of an ancient feud: these are my stories. Most of the ghosts are pretty well behaved; the fires burn blue but they're never quite quenched; and there isn't a real case of heart-failure to be got out of the book. But there's a good deal of literary grace and charm to be found in it.

—EDWARD WAGENKNECHT

POETRY OF IMMORTALITY

UNSEEN WINGS, compiled by Stanton A. Coblenz. The Beechhurst Press, New York. 282 pp., \$4.50.

Though the publishers of this volume introduce it by claiming "Never before has there been an anthology like this one," the compiler himself points to two predecessors, Margaret Widdermer's *The Haunted Hour* and August Derleth's *Dark of the Moon*, both of which, he claims, are somewhat limited in their scope, while his book is planned more for the general reader and presumably bridges all gaps by "offering a comprehensive representation of all poems dealing with the weird hinterlands of human experience. Its standards of selection are threefold: 1) All inclusions must be at a high poetic level; 2) All must touch upon some perception, feeling, recognition, or awareness which is not that of everyday, 'normal' human activity; 3) in all, the test must be the element of experience, actual or imagined, rather than mere beliefs, etc."

The order is a large one, and, however interesting Mr. Coblenz's collection is, he does not fill the order. The flaws of *Unseen Wings* are as readily set forth as Mr. Coblenz's criteria for selection—1) both the book's predecessors are superior to this one; 2) Mr. Coblenz has included a great mass of inferior lines by mere versifiers; 3) Mr. Coblenz's omissions loom far larger than his inclusions—totally missing from this collection of "invisible world—weird —supranormal" poetry is any work by Thomas Lovell Beddoes, J. Sheridan LeFanu, Fitz-James O'Brien, James Whitcomb Riley, Dora Sigerson Shorter, Thomas Hardy, A. E. Housman, Edward Arlington Robinson, Robert Frost, Amy Lowell, Rachel Field, Josephine Daskam Bacon, William Rose Benet, Vincent Starrett, Stephen Vincent Benet, and all modern poets save one.

Against these omissions Mr. Coblenz has to offer some of the classic British and American writers of the last century (but no Robert Burns), Walter de la Mare, Leah Bodine Drake, Lord Dunsany, A. D. Ficke, Robert Hillyer, Andrew Lang, H. P. Lovecraft, Don Marquis, John Frederick Nims, Ernest Rhys, Rainer M. Rilke, Clark Ashton Smith, Leonora Speyer, George Sterling, Charles Hanson Towne, Mark Van Doren, William Watson, and a goodly number of extremely mediocre poems by little-known poets who are hardly more than amateurs in the field. His inclusions do not balance his omissions. As a result, *Unseen Wings* is likely to be dismissed as a weak compilation by an editor whose standards of selection were neither broad nor selective enough, and whose taste in poetry is entirely likely to be questioned by readers.

Yet *Unseen Wings* is not without merit. If the overpricing of the book does not frighten buyers away, there are many rewarding pages in this anthology.

—JOHN HALEY

"AMERICAN DREAMS" AND UTOPIAS

AMERICAN DREAMS, A STUDY OF AMERICAN UTOPIAS, by Vernon Parrington, Jr. Brown University, Providence, 1947. 324 pp., \$5.00.

"A map of the world that does not include Utopia is not worth looking at," said Oscar Wilde, quoted by Vernon Louis Parrington, Jr., in *American Dreams, A Study of American Utopias*.

An expansion of the senior Parrington's posthumous fragment analyzing Bellamy's *Looking Backward*, *American Dreams* is in the familiar Parrington tradition of interpreting American history by literary works and figures assumed typical of the period in question. Dozens of suitable utopias are summarized chronologically, with reference to their social background, and are exhaustively analyzed in a very sprightly fashion.

To avoid the recurrence of the misunderstandings of purpose and method that very unjustly met J. O. Bailey's *Pilgrims Through Space and Time* I should like to state that *American Dreams* is not a history or a literary appreciation, except incidentally, of science-fiction. But it is nevertheless an important book to the reader of science-fiction because of the many works that exist in the borderland where utopias overlap with fantasies.

Parrington begins by summarizing briefly the European concept of the New World as a utopia itself, then discusses the non-fictional Puritan utopia of John Eliot (*The Christian Commonwealth*), which that sour fanatic hoped to inflict upon the Indians, then Sanford's *Humour of Utopia*, and later the minor unfamiliar utopian works of Edward Everett Hale, Nathaniel Hawthorne, Mark Twain and others. An extensive analysis of Bellamy's *Looking Backward*, with his predecessors, imitators, critics and followers is the high spot of the book, followed by discussions of such well-known fantasy titles as *Nequa*, *Caesar's Column*, *The Future Commonwealth*, *President John Smith*, *The Garden of Eden*, *U.S.A.*, and *The Legal Revolution of 1902*. The publishing work of Charles H. Kerr, a prominent Chicago publisher who specialized in fantasies, utopias, and socialistic books forms an interesting chapter, and then the history moves into recent days with discussions of Huey Long (*Every Man a King*), Upton Sinclair, Granville Hicks, and Franz Werfel.

The selection of books is a welcome change from the steady diet of Plato, More, Campanella, Bacon, Bellamy, and William Morris that previous writers about utopias have confined themselves to. It would be unfair and pointless to mention the many fantastic utopias which Parrington has failed to mention, but in some cases we might question Parrington's choice. We wonder why Charles Brockden Brown's *Carsol*, probably the first utopia written in America, or its rival claimant *Lithconia*, were not mentioned. *Symzonia* also could have been profitably used. Also, we would very emphatically debate the propriety of including

The Land of the Changing Sun by Harben (an adventure story), *The People of the Ruins* by Edward Shanks (British, not American, with very slight utopian implications), *Lost Horizon* (British), and others. And from a sociological point of view Brook Farm, Alcott's *Fruitlands* and other New England utopian communities of the 1840's seem neglected.

The greatest flaw in *American Dreams*, probably is the failure to supply a statement of purpose or an initial definition of utopia. The definition given by inference from the books mentioned is a strange one: crackpot political tracts are quoted as equally valid with classical fictional utopias, religious absurdities with coldly logical and practicable schemes of civic improvement. And several fictional pieces are included which do not seem at all utopian to me. By a slight extension Parrington's definition of a utopia would include most books on civic improvement, in fact anything describing a society somewhat different from our own. The classical definition of a work describing an ideal society, written with a certain degree of wish fulfillment seems still suitable.

Like other historians of the utopia, Parrington has not differentiated between the positive utopia, in which the author presents his beautiful dream (the true classical utopia) and the negative utopia, an exaggerated satire, the artist's nightmare, which has come to be associated in usage with the classical utopia. American examples of the positive utopia are Charles Brockden Brown's *Carsol*, and Anon Moore's *John Harvey*; and of the negative utopia, Parry's *Scarlet Empire* and Condee's *Crucible Island*, both of which very savagely show the flaws inherent in a community practicing socialism. The negative utopia, seemingly, has recently outgrown the classical utopia, for destruction is easier and more fascinating than starry-eyed creation. Excellent British and American negative literary utopias are Huxley's *Brave New World*, Ruthven Todd's *Over the Mountain* and *The Lost Traveller*, Lewis's *It Can't Happen Here*, and H. R. Read's *The Green Child*, where the author ably contrasts a crass political utopia with a subtle intellectual utopia.

The origin of the ideas in each of the utopias considered has been very ably handled. Parrington has adjudged between independent origin and traditional influence, individual and society, very skillfully in the chapters on Bellamy and the late 19th century utopias, and has performed an admirable piece of literary detective work. Our sole criticism on the historical judgments

is that Parrington, probably unintentionally, sometimes gives the impression that America existed in a cultural vacuum since the Puritan Fathers. I am very curious, for example, to know what influence, if any, the Pennsylvania utopias of the British Lake Poets had on the New England communities, what carryovers there were from the imaginary voyage as written in Europe, to American idealism. But, these are subjects in themselves, and perhaps one ought not to expect too much.

One or two other minor points of disagreements on matters of interpretation are Parrington's condemnation of Thomas Lake Harris, the American mystic and occultist, as a fraud and poseur, and the following quote: "The Technocrats, nevertheless, left their mark on us . . . And they left us with the so-called funny books, and their men of tomorrow. Flash Gordon, Superman, Captain Marvel, the Phantom, Captain America, Bullet Man and Prince Valiant."

In summary: A good scholarly job, sound in general, ably written, with some slight deficiencies in both plan and execution, but well worth having. Readers of fantastic literature owe Mr. Parrington a debt of gratitude.

—EVERETT F. BLEILER

SALEM AGAIN

THE EVENING WOLVES, by Marie McCall. The John Day Company.
279 pp., \$3.00.

Let us all bow our heads and give one minute of reverent thanks to the John Day Company—for lo, they have passed a miracle. They have actually printed an historical novel without using a bust-developer advertisement for a jacket picture! Although *The Evening Wolves* is a novel of the New England witchcraft craze, there is no illustration of an impure Puritan miss with a plunging neckline, cottoning up to Cotton Mather.

Matter of fact, Cotton Mather isn't even mentioned in this story, although the hero, redheaded Reverend Jonathan Grigg (youngest minister of Boston Town) seems to usurp his historical role as a pamphleteer and preacher against Satan.

Unfortunately, the reader of this pedestrian novel who is interested in the witchcraft trial background must reach the 19th chapter and 136th page before this element enters into the story. Up to that point, it's a rambling account of the marriage of bigoted Jonathan Grigg and young Ann Walton, who incurs the wrath of her husband and the community by bringing soup to the

poor. Her patience and forbearance in the face of intolerance will probably not be shared by the average reader.

When the witch-craze begins (incited, it seems, by hysterical children who dislike the heroine) the book picks up speed and interest. But here again, the average reader will grow impatient, for the author does not exploit her material save as a background for the "conflict" between hero and heroine. Ann eventually stands trial for witchcraft, her husband aids her to escape, and the craze ends abruptly.

It is impossible for the fantasy-lover to read this book without envisioning a treatment of the same subject-matter by a writer of Lovecraft's erudition and ability. The sketchy handling of material in the present volume is vastly disappointing; although it is obvious that the author went to considerable pains in her research, the result is unfortunate.

The psychological conflict of *The Scarlet Letter* has its own power; the rephrasing of that conflict in terms of belief or disbelief in witches falls flat by comparison. Yet it is this which Marie McCall seems to have attempted. It would have been better if she had chosen to exploit the rich vein of fantasy inherent in her subject-matter for its own sake. A Lovecraft could have conjured up a picture of New England in the grip of brooding terror; a Bradbury could have created an unforgettable portrait of hysterical children simulating demoniac possession. Marie McCall gives us a routine struggle between husband and wife; a rehash of *Patient Griselda*.

The Evening Wolves is neither factual nor fantastic. The definitive novel of the New England witchcraft trials remains to be written—and when it is, ten to one it will appear with a jacket featuring a heroine with a plunging neckline.

—ROBERT BLOCH

A MIXED BAG

INVASION FROM MARS, Selected by Orson Welles. Dell Publishing Company, New York. 191 pp., \$.25.

LIFE ON OTHER WORLDS, by H. Spencer Jones. Mentor Books, New York. 160 pp., \$.35.

A MARTIAN ODYSSEY AND OTHERS, by Stanley G. Weinbaum. Fantasy Press, Reading, Pa. 289 pp., \$3.00.

DESCENT INTO HELL, by Charles Williams. Pellegrini & Cudahy, New York. 248 pp., \$2.75.

THE END OF THE WORLD, by Geoffrey Dennis. Eyre and Spottiswoode, London. 224 pp., 8/6.

THE HISTRIONIC MR. POE, by Bryllion Fagin. The Johns Hopkins Press, Baltimore. 289 pp., \$4.00.

We would seem to be at this time in that particular stage of fantasy publishing in which everything which can conceivably be published is being put between covers. The result must inevitably be that many potential readers of good fantasy will be repelled, perhaps permanently, by a great deal of mediocre and downright bad fantasy, chiefly space opera, which they may encounter before an acquaintance with really fine and worthy fantasy. The books here noticed, however, do not fall under the interdict; all are eminently worthy of the attention of either the discriminating reader or the student of fantasy.

We have given notice to the Orson Welles paperback previously in these pages, and there is little need to say more about it save to emphasize that it is a superb little collection of interplanetary tales by Murray Leinster, Anthony Boucher, Ray Bradbury, Robert A. Heinlein, Nelson Bond, Frederic Brown, Isaac Asimov, Theodore Sturgeon, and includes Howard Koch's script for the Welles broadcast of *The War of the Worlds*, which alone would make it a collector's item for fantasy readers.

Mr. H. Spencer Jones' inquiry into the problem of life on other worlds is an effective summary of the evidence thus far at hand, and the attempts to answer the question of whether life can and does exist on other planets. Dr. Jones outlines the picture of the Universe which modern astronomy provides, and, after examining evidence and postulates, he concludes that "there must be other worlds where the appropriate conditions are to be found and where therefore we may suppose that life in some form or other does actually exist." An ideal little pocketbook, which merits the support of fandom. There are illustrations and also approving blurbs by J. H. Jeans and A. S. Eddington.

The late Stanley G. Weinbaum was not a particularly good writer. He never seems to have risen above the lower levels of pulp writing, and yet he could always tell a good story, and if one set out simply to enjoy a well-told narrative, then one could very well recognize that Weinbaum was in many respects a superior story-teller. His stories in *A Martian Odyssey and Others* are told almost racily; they are action stories in terms of interplanetary fiction, but it must be conceded that Weinbaum at least made an attempt to escape the stereotypes of space opera, and his non-human entities particularly came to more credible life under

Weinbaum's hands than under any other's. For these reasons, this new publication of the Fantasy Press deserves a good hand, and can be recommended to readers who want to own the best of fantasy. The stories in this book are: *A Martian Odyssey*, *Valley of Dreams*, *The Adaptive Ultimate*, *The Mad Moon*, *The Worlds of If*, *The Ideal*, *The Points of View*, *Pygmalion's Spectacles*, *Parasite Planet*, *The Lotus Eaters*, *The Planet of Doubt*, and *The Circle of Zero*.

Judging by the tenor of critical comment which has appeared in the wake of American publication of *All Hallows' Eve* and *Descent Into Hell*, there would seem to be no middle ground about Charles Williams; readers become enthusiastic or they remain cold to his work. For our part, we are inclined to enthusiasm, restrained a little perhaps by the realization that Williams' metaphysical symbolism well impede the pace of his narratives or might be totally lost to some readers. Both the Williams novels are rather unique; they are superficially thrillers in the genre of the supernatural, but primarily they are metaphysical allegories.

The story of *Descent Into Hell* is briefly that of a man who deliberately chose hell here and hereafter, and of a girl pursued by a doppelganger, and of what happened at Battle Hill; it is a remarkable novel, certainly to our mind one of the best in the genre, and one which will have an irresistible appeal to all those who love the best in the field. And there are not many novels as good as *Descent Into Hell* in the entire field of fantasy. The aficionado can hardly do less than support the venture of Pellegrini & Cudahy to publish in America all the fantastic novels of Charles Williams by adding them to his shelves as they come from press.

Geoffrey Dennis's *The End of the World* was awarded the Hawthornden Prize in England when it was first published in 1930. A masterpiece of English style, it is nothing more or less than a discursive consideration of the ways in which the world might come to an end. Mr. Dennis's consideration of the ways, natural and supernatural, by which the final destruction of humanity may come about represents an ideal combination of scientific and poetic imagination; it is so worthy, indeed, that *The End of the World* is surely a prose classic of our time, minor perhaps, but a classic no less. There is some possibility of the book's publication in America; in any case, it ought to be on the

shelves of every devotee of fantasy, be it supernatural fiction or science-fiction.

Our esteemed contemporary, Mr. H. L. Menchen, considers that "of all the Poe books ever done in English, N. Bryllion Fagin's *The Histrionic Mr. Poe* seems to me the best, and by long odds. It is well informed, it is shrewd and convincing in its judgments, and it is beautifully written." This is a tribute indeed from a man whose accolade is to be treasured. Mr. Fagin's theory is that much of the gloom and doom myth clinging about Poe was the exclusive property of Poe himself, that Poe delighted in it, just as a man may have the gift of turning his suffering into a weapon of self-defense. Thus Poe's unhappiness may have been "mere inflation, the swellings of high performance, in which art enlarged upon reality." Dr. Fagin's study is brilliantly and persuasively written; students of Poe cannot afford to overlook it.

—AUGUST DERLETH

BOOKS RECEIVED

NINETEEN EIGHTY-FOUR, by George Orwell. Harcourt, Brace & Company, New York. 314 pages, \$3.00.

THE HUMANOIDS, by Jack Williamson. Simon & Schuster, New York. 239 pages, \$2.00.

THE THIRTY-FIRST OF FEBRUARY, by Nelson Bond. Gnome Press, New York. 272 pages, \$3.00.

WATCH THE NORTHWIND RISE, by Robert Graves. Creative Age Press, New York. 290 pages, \$3.00.

EDITORIAL COMMENTARY

Coming Events

There are certain forthcoming books in which the fantasy enthusiast will unquestionably be interested, and we consider it an obligation to alert our readers for their publication. Two of them are coming from Shasta Publishers, who have announced a reprint of S. Fowler Wright's famed novel, *The World Below*, for this summer at \$3.50 the copy, and publication of Everett F. Bleiler's *The Guide to Imaginative Literature* for December publication at \$6.00 the copy. Our readers will recall that *The World Below* was one of the novels listed as essential to any basic library of science-fiction, and it is therefore a title everyone should possess. As for Mr. Bleiler's *Guide*—suffice it to say that it describes over a thousand fantastic fiction books, each entry containing bibliographic information, a summary of the story or stories, critical and historical comments, evaluations and recommendations on readability, and other comments. Readers who are familiar with Mr. Bleiler's *The Checklist of Fantastic Literature* will have had evidence that Mr. Bleiler's scholarship leaves little to be desired.

This summer also Frederick Fell, Inc., will publish what is hoped to be the first annual collection of the best science-fiction. Thus far the title is tentatively down as *The Best Science-Fiction Stories: 1949* (\$2.95); it is edited and prefaced by Everett F. Bleiler and T. E. Dikty, and it will contain the following stories—*Mars Is Heaven* and . . . *And the Moon Be Still as Bright*, by Ray Bradbury; *The Strange Case of John Kingman*, by Murray Leinster; *Thang*, by Martin Gardner; *Doughnut Jockey*, by Erik Fennel; *Period Piece*, by J. J. Coupling; *Knock*, by Frederic Brown; *Genius*, by Poul Anderson; *No Connection*, by Isaac Asimov; *In Hiding*, by Wilmar Shiras; *Happy Ending*, by Henry Kuttner; and *Ex Machina*, by Lewis Padgett.

Moreover, readers who are interested in cornerstone works for science-fiction devotees will be pleased to know that the Macmillan Company is reissuing two books by J. W. Dunne—*Experiment in Time*, revised and expanded (\$2.50) and *Serial Universe* (\$3.00); both are due in mid-summer. Other titles, particularly in science-fiction, are due, but few of them excite us as possibilities for permanent shelf space in the aficionado's library.

Looking ahead still farther, more books by Ray Bradbury will soon be available to the book-buying public. The first of them will be *The Martian Chronicles*, the second *Frost and Fire*; both are coming from Doubleday & Company, which begins its science fiction program in September with publication of *The Big Eye*, by Max Ehrlich, a story of the 1960's, when "the world's astronomers announce that Earth has only two years to live." Fell will follow their anthology with four science-fiction titles—*The Kid from Mars*, by Oscar J. Friend; *The Last Space Ship*, by Murray Leinster; *John Carstairs: Space Detective*, by Frank Belknap Long; and *The Star Kings*, by Edmond Hamilton. And Pellegrini & Cudahy, in addition to the Charles Williams series, intend to follow the Derleth anthologies with other books in the genre.

Our Science-Fiction Anthologies

With publication of *The Other Side of the Moon* earlier this year, reviewers and critics, particularly those not associated with what we have quite correctly called the lunatic fringe of fandom, have divined our purpose in producing these anthologies. So, too, have the majority of writers in the field. Perhaps Anthony Boucher was the first to sound the right note, when he wrote of *Strange Ports of Call*, "This is the ideal introduction to lure the hitherto blase into a new and absorbing field of speculation and pleasure," and recently in the *Chicago Sun-Times* wrote of *The Other Side of the Moon*, "Derleth displays unerring taste in picking precisely those stories which will best seduce the general reader into this new world of strange and wonderful imaginings."

But Mr. Boucher is no longer alone in his perception of our purpose. While the vociferous lunatic fringe are still scornfully dismissing the anthologies as "alleged science-fiction", responsible critics are giving these two collections the kind of attention we have hoped for, as sample comments will testify. "It may come as a surprise to find that this work, considering its wild lack of limitations, is ingenious and often literate fiction."—*The New Yorker*. . . . "The editor of Arkham House knows a good story when he sees one, and any follower of imaginative literature will enjoy this collection."—*The Dallas Times-Herald*. . . . "Worthwhile collection of straight science-fiction and wonder stories."—*The Booklist*. . . . "For imaginative entertaining it excels in its field."—*Virginia Kirkus*.

These and other comments indicate that our purpose in our anthologies, which was simply to broaden the horizons for the acceptance of the science-fiction story as a legitimate fiction form is succeeding. We commend these facts to the attention of the reader who comes face to face with the cretinous malice of the lunatic fringe.

Our Contributors

The contributors to this issue have all appeared in these pages previously and are thus too well known to our readers to require the customary lines of identity.

Rheinhart Kleiner (1893-1949)

With sorrow we report to our patrons the death of yet another member of the Kalem Club, the limited membership of which included H. P. Lovecraft. Rheinhart Kleiner, who not long ago contributed to *The Arkham Sampler* his own memoir of Lovecraft, died suddenly on May 9th. Often called "The Minnesinger of the Mendham Hills", Mr. Kleiner was a fellow-member of Lovecraft's in the amateur press association to which they belonged, and, like Lovecraft, contributed prose and verse to *The Vagrant*, *The Ghost*, *The Conservative*, *Pegasus*, *The Olympian*, *The Californian*, and many another amateur publication. Onetime President of the United States Amateur Press Association, succeeding H. P. Lovecraft to that office, he was for many years a correspondent of Lovecraft's. Time inexorably narrows the Lovecraft circle, and Rheinhart Klener now takes his place beside Robert E. Howard, Henry S. Whitehead, James F. Morton, Arthur Leeds, W. Paul Cook and others of that little group who made up that circle of intimate friends and correspondents who knew H. P. Lovecraft.



Arbham House

Announces

In the Next Issue

HOLIDAY

a story by RAY BRADBURY

THE TRIUMPH OF DEATH

a story by H. RUSSELL WAKEFIELD

FOOTNOTE TO DUNNE

by ANTHONY BOUCHER

SIDNEY SIME OF WORPLESDON

by MARTIN GARDNER

SATAN'S SERVANTS

a story by ROBERT BLOCH

with notes by H. P. LOVECRAFT





ARKHAM HOUSE: PUBLISHERS
SAUK CITY, WISCONSIN